

Ultrasound-Guided Trigger Finger Release

Home instructions after your office procedure

Patient: _____ Surgery / procedure date: _____

This is the full Pacific Bone & Joint postoperative protocol. Patient-specific operative and discharge orders take precedence over this default pathway.

The first two days

Gentle finger movement helps prevent stiffness. Protect the small wound and increase hand use gradually as soreness improves. Follow any changes written by your care team.

Treated finger _____ Follow-up appointment _____

Protect your hand today

- The local anesthetic may leave your hand numb for several hours. Avoid heat, sharp tools and lifting until normal feeling returns. Remove rings while the hand is swollen.
- Rest your hand above heart level when possible during the first 24-48 hours. Once feeling returns, you may use a wrapped cold pack for 10-15 minutes at a time. Keep the dressing dry; never place ice directly on skin.
- Arrange a ride home and do not drive on the day of the procedure.

Care for the wound

- Keep the original dressing clean and dry for 48 hours unless we give you a different instruction. If the outer wrap feels tight, loosen that wrap without disturbing the strips or glue over the wound.
- After 48 hours, remove the outer dressing. If the wound is closed and dry, gently wash with soap and running water, pat dry and cover with a clean bandage. Change the bandage daily or whenever wet or dirty.
- Leave skin strips or glue in place until they loosen. Do not pull them off. If you have stitches, we will arrange removal.
- Do not soak the hand, swim, use a hot tub or go in the ocean until the wound is fully closed and dry, usually about 10-14 days. Do not apply peroxide, alcohol or ointment unless instructed.

Comfort and medicines

Use the pain medicines listed on your discharge instructions. Acetaminophen may help if your care team says it is safe for you; follow the label and avoid taking more than one product containing it. Use ibuprofen or naproxen only if cleared by your care team. Resume prescribed blood thinners only according to the plan you were given.

Call promptly for increasing redness, drainage, worsening pain or new numbness. A cold, pale or blue finger needs urgent medical evaluation.

Movement and return to activities

Begin gentle movement when the numbness wears off

1. Open your hand and straighten your fingers as comfortably as possible.
2. Slowly make a loose fist, then open your hand again. Do not squeeze tightly.
3. With the large knuckles fairly straight, bend the middle and end joints into a gentle hook, then straighten again.

Do 5-10 repetitions of each movement, 4-6 times a day. Mild pulling is acceptable; stop for sharp pain, renewed locking or worsening swelling. Do not force a bent finger straight. Avoid stress balls, putty and grip strengthening during the first week.

Build activity gradually

When: What you may do

First week: Light eating, dressing, phone use and typing as comfortable. Avoid forceful gripping, heavy lifting, power tools and pushing your body weight through the hand.

After 1-2 weeks: If the wound is closed and movement is comfortable, gradually add gripping and lifting. Stop and reduce activity if soreness or swelling increases later that day or the next morning.

Heavy work or sport: Return when you can grip firmly and move the finger without catching, sharp pain or increasing swelling, and your care team has cleared the activity.

Resume driving only when you have normal feeling and control of the hand, can safely grip and turn the wheel, and are no longer taking sedating medicine.

What to expect and when to call

Bruising, swelling and tenderness at the base of the finger can last several weeks. A finger that was stiff before surgery may recover more slowly. Contact us if locking continues or returns, or the finger cannot straighten. Hand therapy may help persistent stiffness, especially if the finger was bent before surgery.

Call (808) 439-6201 for fever of 100.4 degF (38 degC) or higher, spreading redness, pus, pain that is getting worse, new loss of feeling or movement, or bleeding that continues after 15 minutes of firm pressure. Go to an emergency department promptly for a cold, pale or blue finger, or severe symptoms if you cannot reach us. Call 911 for trouble breathing or a severe allergic reaction.

Keep your follow-up, usually 7-14 days after the procedure. If it has not been scheduled, call us. Changes to your instructions _____

Clinical references: Nikolaou et al. World Journal of Orthopedics 2017;8:163-169. doi:10.5312/wjo.v8.i2.163. Lu et al. Archives of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation 2015;96:91-97. doi:10.1016/j.apmr.2014.09.001. Dressing and activity intervals are clinic protocol choices.