

Department of  
**OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY**

# Coping with Upper Limb Injuries





## After An Injury

### What Can I Expect After Sustaining a Hand/Arm Injury?

Your hand/arm injuries can be:

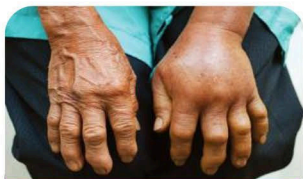
- Trauma related (e.g. from falls)
- Non-trauma related (e.g. overuse)

You may be referred for hand and upper limb rehabilitation by your doctor.

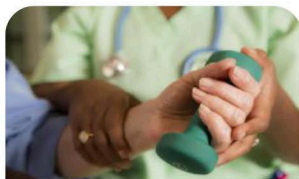
### What are the Possible/Common Signs and Symptoms After an Injury?

You may experience:

- Pain
- Swelling
- Decreased mobility and strength



Hand Swelling



Decreased Strength

You may also find yourself struggling with activities of daily living (ADL) such as bathing, having meals, participating in leisure activities and even work.





# Rehabilitation Journey

## My Rehabilitation Journey

Hand Occupational Therapy (OT) aims to help you maximise your function and regain independence in your ADLs.

## What Can I Expect From My Hand OT Sessions?

Your rehabilitation journey typically consists of several hand therapy sessions. You may be required to wear a splint for a period of time. Splints are supports that provide protection and stability to the injured area to promote healing.

Other therapeutic interventions provided include:

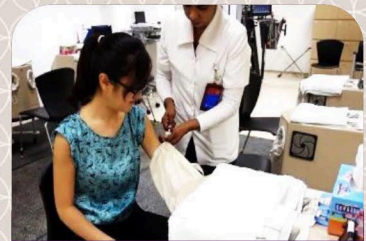
- Patient education
- Resumption of functional activities (with activity modification advice);
- Therapeutic modalities (example: heat treatment) and exercise prescriptions to decrease pain, improve your mobility and strength



Upper Limb Exercises



Resumption of  
Functional Activities



Therapeutic Modalities

## What Can I Safely Do Now?

You should continue to use your affected hand/arm safely to prevent stiffness and further weakness. You will be advised by your Occupational Therapist on suitable/modified ADL which you can resume. Depending on the complexity of your injury, rate of healing and compliance to therapy, resumption of physically demanding activities including sports may take 6 months or longer.



## General Tips

- If you were wearing a cast, you may experience skin dryness after your cast is removed. This can be improved by applying moisturiser on your hands regularly after washing.
- If you had surgery, go for regular wound dressing as advised and keep the dressing clean and dry.
- After stitch removal, practise good hand hygiene with warm soapy water as advised.
- If your injured upper limb is swollen, raise it above heart level on a supported surface to reduce swelling.
- Follow the exercise routines and tips to perform your ADLs safely as recommended by your Occupational Therapist.



Clinic B1C  
Occupational Therapy  
TTSH Medical Centre, Level B1  
Contact:  
6357 7000 (Central Hotline)



Scan the QR Code with your smart phone  
to access the information online or visit  
<http://bit.ly/TTSHHealth-Library>

Was this information helpful?  
Please feel free to email us if you  
have any feedback regarding what  
you have just read at  
[patienteducation@ttsh.com.sg](mailto:patienteducation@ttsh.com.sg)



© Tan Tock Seng Hospital, Singapore 2021. All rights reserved. All information correct as of June 2021. No part of this document may be reproduced, copied, reverse compiled, adapted, distributed, commercially exploited, displayed or stored in a database, retrieval system or transmitted in any form without prior permission of Tan Tock Seng Hospital. All information and material found in this document are for purposes of information only and are not meant to substitute any advice provided by your own physician or other medical professionals.