

Hand/Occupational Therapy Home Program

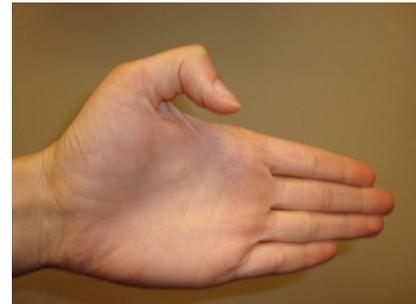
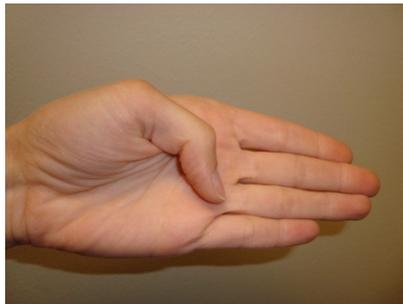
Thumb Intrinsic Strengthening

These exercises should be done slowly and smoothly using your own muscle power. Hold for a count of 3 for each exercise. You may add a rubber band to the exercises with a star (*) if your therapist wishes you to start resistance and reduce the hold-to motion only.

Thumb EPB firing

_____reps _____x/day

Start with your thumb bent in the palm in line with the middle finger. Both thumb joints need to be flexed. Lift the thumb up and away from the hand. Hold and repeat.*



Thumb APB firing

_____reps _____x/day

Start with your thumb bent in the palm in line with the middle finger. Both thumb joints need to be flexed. Lift the thumb out and away from the hand. Hold and repeat.*



Thumb "Puppet"

_____reps _____x/day

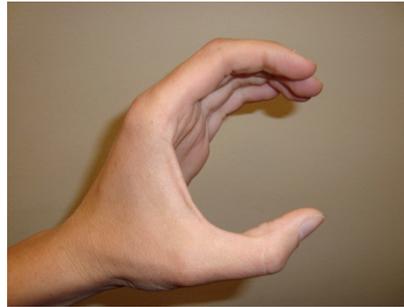
Make a puppet face with your hand and open the mouth using your thumb. Try to keep the thumb in contact with the side of your index finger. Hold and repeat.



Thumb “C” Position

_____reps _____x/day

Make a “C” with your entire hand as if you were holding a cup. You may use a cup as a reference for proper thumb position. Your thumb pad must touch the cup. Hold the position and take the cup out. Flex hard in the position. Hold for 10 counts.

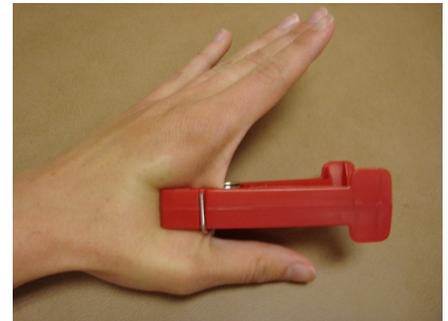


Additional Thumb Care

Your thumb joint has changed and that affects the way your thumb is used in motion and strength activities. The mechanics are different due to structural changes in the bone and muscular imbalances that come from compensation. These strategies will establish better mechanics to allow less discomfort and proper use of your hand.

Adductor Stretch with “Chip Clip”

This activity will help to relax a tight muscle that has been “guarding” your thumb. This muscle tightness restricts your natural motion and causes stress on the joint. Place a chip clip in the web space between your thumb and index finger to allow a stretch to occur while the pressure of the clip is on the muscle belly. You may also use your other hand. Hold for 30 seconds to 1 minute. Do this as frequently as tolerated throughout the day.



Thumb “Head Rocking”

This will align your joint, in case it slips “out of place” once in awhile. You will know this mobilization exercise helps if your pain is relieved after a short period of discomfort when attempting this activity. Splint use after this is recommended. Interlock your hands so that your thumb web spaces are touching. Place your painful thumb on the crown of your head (with the area between the joints touching) and rock your thumb from front to back until you feel some relief. You may do this frequently during the day.



Thumb Distraction

Sometimes it may be OK to pull a little on your thumb. This is not “cracking knuckles,” but it allows some space in the joint. Your hand doctor or therapist will let you know if it is safe. This can possibly relieve some pressure in the joint.

Please contact Bonnie Glenzinski at 952-456-7000 if you have any questions.