

Hospital Telephone Number

If you have any problems at all please do not hesitate to contact the Nuffield Health Exeter Hospital Belvedere Ward on **01392 262135**, and ask to speak to the ward nurse in charge.

Alternatively you can telephone the Physiotherapy Department on **01392 262121**.

Hand Therapists

Jackie Fowler MCSP SRP BAHT

Specialist Hand Therapist

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Specialist Hand Therapist

Nuffield Health Exeter Hospital

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DERMOFASCIECTOMY

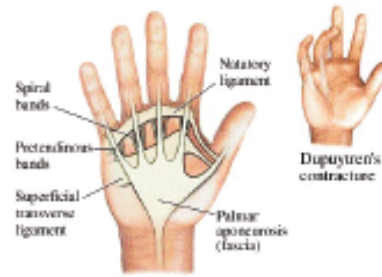
Information and Advice Leaflet

Nuffield Health Exeter Hospital



The Operation

You will have your Dupuytren's contracture corrected by removal of the abnormal fascia and the overlying involved skin. The skin will be replaced by a skin graft taken from the upper arm. Local anaesthetic will be injected around the site of the operation and the fingers may remain numb for sometime after surgery.



After the Operation

After this procedure, you will go to the recovery area of the operating theatre, and once you are fully awake (20-30 mins), you will return to your room. Your operated hand and forearm will be raised in a special sponge sling called a 'Bradford sling', keeping the hand elevated will help prevent swelling and discomfort at this early stage.

When can I go home?

Dermofasciectomy is usually performed as a day case meaning you will be able to go home the day of your surgery. You will not be able to drive so please arrange for someone to take you home when you are discharged.

Before your operation, it may be beneficial to get heavier housework done and prepare some easy meals that you can just warm up—especially if you live alone. You will not be able to easily use your operated hand, and it is best to rest and elevate it for the first couple of weeks. It is good to move all unaffected joints—shoulder, elbow and wrist.

Wound care

You will have a bulky dressing applied to your hand, which will remain in place for a week then reduced, and removed at 2/3 weeks. This is to protect the skin graft while it heals, and initially no movement of the finger is allowed. You will also have a small dressing over the upper arm, where the skin graft was taken from. This dressing is removed at approximately 14 days.

Pain

During the surgery, the area is usually numbed with local anaesthetic, which will gradually wear off after 12-24 hours. After that, there may be some discomfort lasting for 24-48 hours. You will be given a small supply of pain-relieving tablets by the hospital. Once these run out, take your normal pain relieving tablets e.g. paracetamol, if you need to.

Driving

If you have had a general anaesthetic, you must not drive or operate machinery within 24 hours of the anaesthetic.

You should avoid driving for 4 weeks. The graft needs time to heal fully before you are able to grip the controls.

Exercise

It is important to keep your hand elevated, as this will help reduce swelling and pain. Do not sit or stand with your hand hanging down for the first week after surgery. You must continue to move your shoulder and elbow as normal to prevent these becoming stiff. At one week the hand therapists will give you exercises to do, and you will need to work on these finger exercises over the next few weeks to regain movement. A splint may be required and will be made by your hand therapist, this will be worn day and night for the first few weeks, then at night only for up to 6 months to keep the hand straight, as your scar heals.

The scars and graft can remain tender for some time and the therapist will advise when you can start to massage the scar with cream e.g. E45.

Returning to work

Timing of your return to work will depend on the nature of the work that you do and the speed of healing of the graft, so you should discuss this with your consultant and hand therapist.

Follow up

You will see a nurse for a change of dressing at one week, and then 2 weeks post op. The graft may look very red and bruised at this stage, but this will fade over time. You will be able to commence specific hand exercises as instructed by your hand therapist. You may also start to get the hand wet after 2 weeks and use it for light activities if the graft is strong enough.