

Hand and Finger Exercises ☆

About this topic

Your doctor may want you to do hand and finger exercises. They may:

- Increase blood flow to nerves, muscles, and joints in your hand
- Ease joint stiffness in your hand
- Help you heal faster after injury or surgery
- Help make your daily activities easier to do

General

Before starting with a program, ask your doctor if you are healthy enough to do these exercises. Your doctor may have you work with a trainer or physical therapist to make a safe exercise program to meet your needs.

Strengthening Exercises

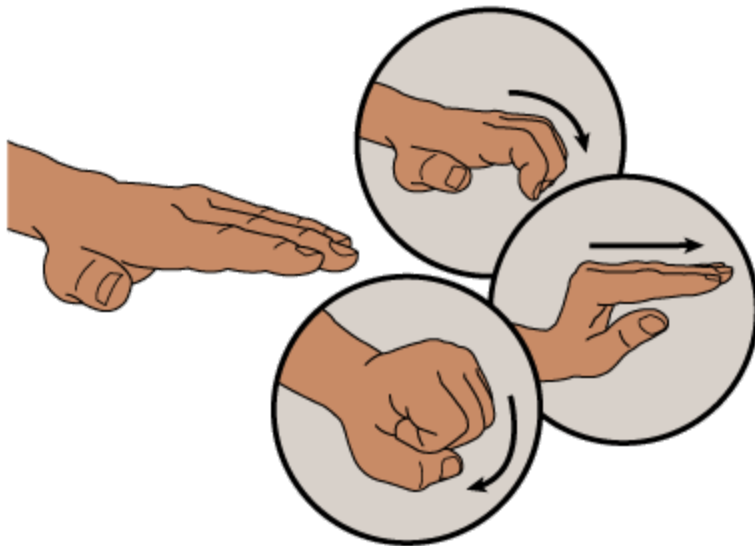
Strengthening exercises keep your muscles firm and strong. Sit while doing these exercises. Be sure to use good posture. Start by repeating each exercise 2 to 3 times. Work up to doing each exercise 10 times. Try to do the exercises 2 to 3 times each day. Do all exercises slowly.

- Tendon gliding exercises using 4 positions – Start by holding your hand with your fingers straight. Then, bend only the last two joints of your fingers and move your fingers into a hook or claw position. Next, straighten your fingers and bend your knuckles to make a flat table top position. This is also called the duckbill position. Last, make a full fist. Moving your hand into all 4 positions is one exercise.
- Finger and thumb bending and straightening – Open your hand as far as you can. Spread your thumb away from the rest of your hand. Close your hand into a fist. Try to touch the tip of your thumb to the bottom of your small finger. Repeat.
- Finger side-to-side – Start with your hand straight and your fingers together. Spread your fingers as far apart as possible. Then, return to starting position.
- Blocking – Lay your hand on the table with the palm facing up. Use the first finger of your other hand as the blocking finger. Place the tip of the blocking finger on the middle section of your finger. Now, bend and straighten just the tip of your finger. Move your blocking finger a little closer to your palm and just bend and straighten the middle joint in your finger.
- Thumb finger touches – Touch the tip of your thumb to the tip of your index finger, making an "o." Touch the tip of your thumb to the tip of your middle finger. Touch the tip of your thumb to the tip of your ring finger. Finally, touch the tip of your thumb to the tip of your small finger. Touching each finger to your thumb is one exercise.
- Thumb circles – Hold your hand on its side with the thumb up. Move your thumb in a circle as wide as you can. Now, make a circle going the other way.

Image(s)

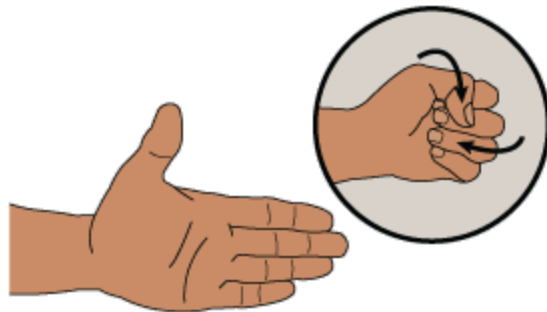
This is a series of images of the left hand with the palm facing down. In the first image, the fingers are together and extended out straight. The next image shows the fingers beginning to curl downward at the end joints. The next image shows the fingers straight, but they are bent at the knuckle where they join the hand. The final image shows the fingers curled into a fist.

Tendon Gliding Exercises



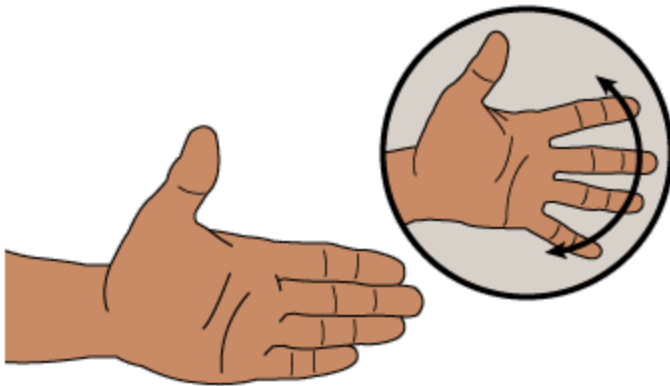
These are 2 images of a person's left hand. In the first image, the hand is extended straight with fingers together and the thumb straight up. In the second image, the fingers are drawn in, making a fist. The thumb is crossed over the fingers.

Finger and Thumb Bending and Straightening



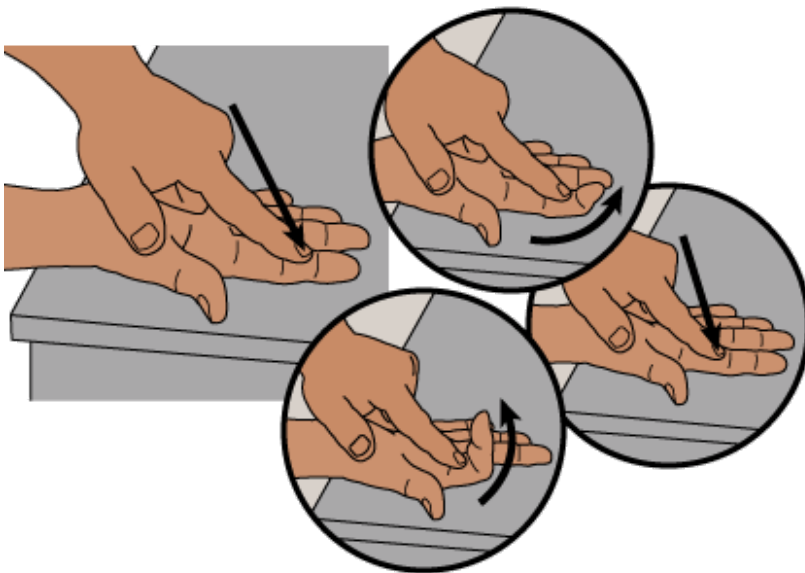
These are 2 images of a person's left hand. In the first image, the hand is extended straight with the fingers together. In the second image, the fingers are extended, but spread far apart.

Finger Side-to-Side



This is a series of images with the right hand palm up with the fingers extended out straight on a table. In one image, the left first finger is pressing on the middle section of the right first finger and the person is bending the tip of the right first finger up towards the palm. In the next images, the person is using the left first finger to press on the section of the right first finger closest to the palm. Then, the person bends the middle joint, moving the end of the finger up towards the palm.

Blocking



This is a series of images of the left hand. In the first one, the first finger and thumb are touching together. In the next, the middle finger and thumb are touching. The third image shows the third finger and the thumb touching and the last image shows the little finger and the thumb touching.

This is a series of images of the left hand on its side, thumb straight up, fingers are together and extended. The images show the thumb moving in a circle. The thumb starts at the base of the first finger, moving down the base of the fingers and then moving up and out in front of the palm of the hand, back to the starting position.

What will the results be?

- Ease hand pain
- Increase blood flow to help healing
- Keep muscles and joints strong and flexible

Helpful tips

- Stay active and work out to keep your muscles strong and flexible.
- Be sure you do not hold your breath when exercising. This can raise your blood pressure. If you tend to hold your breath, try counting out loud when exercising. If any exercise bothers you, stop right away.
- Doing exercises before a meal may be a good way to get into a routine.
- Exercise may be slightly uncomfortable, but you should not have sharp pains. If you do get sharp pains, stop what you are doing. If the sharp pains continue, call your doctor.

Last Reviewed Date

2014-12-30

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This information is not specific medical advice and does not replace information you receive from your health care provider. This is only a brief summary of general information. It does NOT include all information about conditions, illnesses, injuries, tests, procedures, treatments, therapies, discharge instructions or life-style choices that may apply to you. You must talk with your health care provider for complete information about your health and treatment options. This information should not be used to decide whether or not to accept your health care provider's advice, instructions or recommendations. Only your health care provider has the knowledge and training to provide advice that is right for you.

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