



# Children's mallet finger injury: discharge advice

This leaflet gives advice for caring for your child's injured finger.

- Your child has snapped the tendon that normally straightens the end joint of the finger. The tendon may even pull off a small fragment of bone.
- A splint will be applied to keep the finger in a straight position at the end joint. Several types of splint are used, depending on the size and shape of the fingers.



- The splint is worn **continuously** for 6 weeks followed by a further 2 weeks at night and for activities.
- It is very important that the end joint does not bend during the splinted period.
- When you remove the splint to wash your child's finger, it must be held straight on a flat surface and not allowed to bend.
- You will be shown how to change the splint safely.
- Severe mallet fractures sometimes require surgical treatment, especially if the fracture is large or the end joint has dropped out of alignment.
- The vast majority of injuries treated by a splint will heal satisfactorily, leaving normal function.
- Mallet fractures may leave a small bump on the top of your finger and very rarely result in some loss of movement in the joint.
- Redness, tenderness and swelling are common for 3 to 4 months, but will settle.
- Very occasionally, the tendon fails to heal; it can be treated by further splinting and possible surgical repair, although most fingers function well despite a droop at the end joint.

If the pain gets worse or lasts more than 3 weeks, or if you are concerned following discharge from hospital, please contact: Fracture Clinic on **0118 322 6567 (12 noon-5pm, Monday to Friday)** or mobile: **07554 330 369**.

To find out more about our Trust visit [www.royalberkshire.nhs.uk](http://www.royalberkshire.nhs.uk)

**Please ask if you need this information in another language or format.**

RBFT Paediatric Orthopaedic Outpatients, January 2024. Next review due: January 2026

Compassionate

Aspirational

Resourceful

Excellent