

This programme has been designed to involve every joint and muscle in your hands. It aims to maintain mobility and strength, as well as slowing down certain deformities, which can occur.

Do these exercises at least once a day, also when your hands feel good for a long time.

Set regular time aside for them, or better still, attach each exercise to a certain activity, eg,

1. When watching television.
2. Before every meal.

Check each evening that you have not missed any out.

Perform each exercise slowly, bending and stretching as far as possible (within reason if your joints are painful). Remember it is better to do once slowly rather than 10 times quickly.

Relax your joints between each repetition by wiggling your fingers.

Produced by the Occupational Therapy Department, Lister Hospital.
If you do not fully understand these exercises/you are having any difficulties, please contact your therapist.

- 1 STARTING POSITION: Press hands and forearms flat on the table, about 2 feet apart, palms down, fingers and wrists straight; lift thumbs up, hold, move away from fingers, down. One at a time repeat and move fingers towards thumb.

- 2 STARTING POSITION: as for number 1.
Roll hand out, palm up trying to touch table with tips of thumbs – hold – roll back to starting position, palms down. REPEAT.

- 3 STARTING POSITION: Hands and forearms on their side on the table about 2 feet apart. Little fingers down, thumbs up, fingers straight. Bend in the 2 end joints of the fingers – hold – bend in the knuckles to make a fist – hold and reverse. REPEAT.
(Stretch – claw – clench – claw – stretch.)

- 4 STARTING POSITION: Hands and forearms on the table about 2 feet apart, palms up, bring tips of thumbs towards base of little finger – hold – bring tips of thumbs out, trying to touch the table – hold. REPEAT.

- 5 STARTING POSITION: Hands and forearms on their side on the table, 2 feet apart. Make a circle between tip of thumb and index finger by letting the nails meet – hold – stretch all fingers and thumbs out – hold. Continue with middle, ring and little fingers. REPEAT.

- 6 STARTING POSITION: Place forearms on arms of chair, hands hanging free over the edge, palms down, fingers relaxed. Lift hands up – hold – relax hands down – hold. REPEAT.

- 7 STARTING POSITION: Place forearms on arms of chair, hands over the edge, on their sides, fingers relaxed but wrists straight. Make a handshake movement up – hold – down – hold. REPEAT.

- 8 STARTING POSITION: Put a letter, newspaper or tablemat between your thumb and index finger. Hold it with the other hand. Try to pull it away – hold – continue with index, middle finger, ring and little finger. REPEAT.

Wriggle your fingers between each repetition.



**West Hertfordshire Primary Care Trust and
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EXERCISE PROGRAMME FOR HAND AND WRIST

Gradually build up so that you increase the number of repetitions (maximum of 10).

If your hands ache between exercises, reduce the number of repeats. You may have overdone it.

Do not exercise if your joints are hot, swollen, red and painful. This probably indicates that your joints are inflamed. They should be rested and gently put through a full range of movement 5 times a day. Contact your therapist if you are concerned.