

# Wax Therapy for Hands

## Patient Information

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## What is wax therapy?

Paraffin wax is used in a hand wax bath, which is a soft wax that melts at a lower temperature than beeswax, so it does not typically cause any burns/blisters to the skin. Wax therapy has been found to be beneficial for those with various conditions affecting their hands.

## What are the benefits of wax therapy?

Wax therapy can help by: reducing aches and pains in the hands and wrist joints, improving range of movement of the hands by relaxing the muscles, improving circulation and softening the skin.

## What are the risks of wax therapy?

A very small number of people may develop a temporary heat rash or minor burn to the skin following wax therapy. If you have very sensitive skin, you may develop some mild swelling or breakouts. Side effects of wax therapy are rare; however, you need to be aware of these potential risks.

## What does wax therapy entail?

Your therapist may advise wax therapy as a one-off session or advise you attend weekly for up to 6 weeks. Prior to attending the appointment, you are respectfully asked to:

- remove any jewellery from the hands and wrists
- remove any false nails and nail varnish
- not apply any creams / lotions to your hands and wrists
- notify your therapist if you have any reasons why you cannot have the treatment (please see details overleaf).

At the start of each session, your therapist will conduct a simple sensory test to ensure you are able to tell the difference between hot and cold on your hands. Once you and your therapist are happy it is safe to proceed, you will be asked to dip your hands and wrists in and out of the wax bath until enough layers are built up. Your hands will then be wrapped in a plastic wrap and towel to maintain the warmth. Once the wax starts to cool, your therapist will remove the wax from your hands and you will be shown some gentle hand exercises to perform.

If you decide you no longer wish to continue with wax therapy, or if you experience any adverse effects afterwards, please notify your therapist as soon as possible. Please also seek appropriate medical attention if you experience any adverse effects following wax therapy. If you wish to continue with wax therapy once your course of wax therapy is complete, please ask your therapist regarding the self-purchase of home use wax baths.

## Reasons why you may not be able to have wax therapy

For the safety of yourself and others, we ask that you read the following list, as in some instances it may be unwise to have this treatment at this time.

- You must not have open wounds or ulcers, or newly healed wounds or ulcers that may still be fragile. Some minor cuts may be covered with a glove if appropriate.
- You must not have any infectious skin conditions.
- You should not be experiencing a flare up of skin conditions such as psoriasis, eczema etc. You may be able to wear a glove if appropriate.
- Your joints should not feel hot to the touch, for example if you are currently experiencing a “flare up” of Rheumatoid Arthritis. If so, we advise that you do not undertake wax therapy at this time, as this may make your symptoms worse.
- You should not have had any recent radiotherapy.
- You should not be experiencing any symptoms of illness such as influenza, stomach bug etc when attending any hospital appointments, including wax therapy. You should be symptom free for at least 48 hours before attending your appointment.
- You should not be allergic to paraffin wax.

**Please tell your therapist as soon as possible if any of the above apply to you or if you have any questions, as wax therapy may not be suitable for you at this present time.**

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## Comments, Compliments or Complaints

The Patient Relations/Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) Department provides confidential on the spot advice, information and support to patients, relatives, friends and carers.

## Contact Us

Tel: 01942 822376 (Monday to Friday 9am to 4pm)

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## Ask 3 Questions

Become more involved in decisions about your healthcare. You may be asked to make choices about your treatment. To begin with, try to make sure you get the answers to three key questions:

1. What are my options?
2. What are the pros and cons of each option for me?
3. How do I get support to help me make a decision that is right for me?



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## How We Use Your Information

For details on how we collect, use and store the information we hold about you, please take a look at our “how we use your information” leaflet which can be found on the Trust website:

[www.wwl.nhs.uk/patient\\_information/Leaflets/default.aspx](http://www.wwl.nhs.uk/patient_information/Leaflets/default.aspx)

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This leaflet is also available in audio, large print, braille and other languages upon request. For more information please ask in department/ward.

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