Wrightington, Wigan and Leigh Teaching Hospitals
NHS Foundation Trust

Tuft Fracture (Closed)

Version number: **1**
Last modified date: **12th November 2026**

Tuft Fracture (Closed)

Patient Information

Trauma & Orthopaedics

- Author ID: VL
- Leaflet Ref: Musc 089
- Version: 1
- Leaflet title: Tuft Fracture (Closed)
- Date Produced: April 2024
- Expiry Date: April 2026

Introduction



A tuft fracture is usually caused by a crush to the bone in the tip of your finger. This is a common injury. It will be painful, swollen and bruised. Sometimes the nail can also be damaged.

A splint may have been applied to support it. If you have a wound, you will have been given separate wound care advice.

Injury Recovery

- Ice is very good at reducing pain and swelling in the first 3 days. Wrap an icepack (or small bag of frozen peas) in a damp tea towel and place on your finger for 5-10 minutes and repeat every 2-3 hours. Do not use ice if you have any loss of feeling in your fingers

- Elevation of the finger (above the level of your chest) as much as possible to reduce swelling early on

- You may have been given a removable splint. This supports your finger in the early stages of healing to help reduce the pain but allow movement. The splint is not usually required for more than 3 weeks but can be removed as pain allows and for washing

- Take simple painkillers e.g., paracetamol for as long as you need to; do not take more than the recommended dose. Your local Pharmacist is a useful source for pain relief information

- Use your hand as normally as possible for light activities as pain allows. Avoid heavy lifting, ball and contact sports for 6 - 8 weeks. Make sure you do not wear the splint after 4 weeks

Smoking slows down the healing process. We advise that you stop (at least whilst recovering from your injury). Speak to your General Practitioner (GP) or go online at: https://www.nhs.uk/smokefree

Things to expect

As the bone heals, it is usual for a lump to form at the break site; this may be noticeable and it can be permanent. It should not affect day to day activities or grip strength.

Most injuries heal well in 6 weeks without any problems; however, it may take 3-6 months for your symptoms to settle completely. If you have any worries, please call the helpline.

Exercise

It is important to maintain movement of the hand to avoid stiffness developing, even if this means overcoming some discomfort.



Try to bend your fingers, aiming to touch your palm with the tip of your fingers, and then straighten them regularly throughout the day.

It is quite normal to feel some discomfort following exercise, but it is important that this disc omfort eases within 2 hours of finishing the exercise and does not have an overall negative effect on your symptoms.

Risks

- If you are worried about your finger, or develop stiffness after 2 weeks, call the helpline
- You may lose your nail, but another one should grow
- You may have a deformity in your nail
- It is quite normal for some swelling to persist for many months
- This should not affect your function or movement after 6 weeks

Disclaimer

Not all exercises are suitable for everyone, and while every precaution has been taken in sele cting theseexercises, they do not come without risks. If you have any concerns regarding your injury, or whether you should partake in the exercises, then you should consult your GP or Physiotherapist before beginning any exercises in this leaflet.

The exercise plans shown in this leaflet are designed to be used as a guide and a point of refer ence; they can be modified and progressed under the supervision of your Physiotherapist.

For more information online please visit https://www.wwl.nhs.uk/virtual-fracture-clinic

Frequently asked questions

When can I drive?

. You are allowed to drive when:

- You can safely control the car
- You can grip the steering wheel or gear stick
- You can perform an emergency stop

You may NOT be insured with the splint on. It is your own responsibility to check with your insurance company.

When can I go back to work?

This depends on your individual situation. You can return to work when you feel able to do your job.

Further Advice

If you have any concerns regarding your finger, contact:

Fracture Clinic Helpline 01942 822595

Please leave a message with name, telephone number and brief description of reason for call. We will aim to call you back within 24 hours Monday to Friday 8.30am until 5:00pm (please note it will be Monday if you call over the weekend).

If you have any urgent concerns out of hours, please call 111.

Adult MSK Physiotherapy Self-Referral

If you are struggling to regain your movement or get back to normal activities, you can self-refer to **Physiotherapy**. A referral form can be found on this webpage:

https://www.wwl.nhs.uk/adult-msk-physiotherapy-self-referral



Please scan the QR Code to access the website.

Telephone Numbers:

Boston House Health Centre Telephone 0300 707 1113

Leigh Infirmary Telephone 0300 707 1597 / 0300 707 1595

Platt Bridge Health Centre Telephone 0300 707 1772



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