

HOW TO WEAR AND CARE FOR YOUR THERMOPLASTIC SPLINT

Mary Pack Arthritis Program • Occupational Therapy

TYPE OF SPLINT PRESCRIBED: THUMB FINGER WRIST MCP*

* A MCP (Metacarpal phalangeal) splint supports the big knuckles at the base of your fingers.

PURPOSE OF SPLINT

- To reduce pain during daily activities
- To stabilize and support the joint to help reduce inflammation
- To improve joint alignment
- To improve your ability to use your fingers or hand

WEARING INSTRUCTIONS

- Wear the splint as directed by your occupational therapist
 - Wear during tasks that cause pain
 - _____
- Check that the splint fits well before wearing it the first time. Put it on for 30 minutes, then remove it and check your skin for areas of pressure. If there are pressure areas, note where they are, stop wearing the splint and return to your therapist for adjustments.
- Remove the splint every 2 - 3 hours to do your hand exercises. This is important to prevent joint stiffness and to maintain your range of motion. Refer to your exercise handout.
- You may find your normal activities are more awkward while wearing the splint for the first day or so. This is a matter of getting used to a new sense of support.

SPLINT CARE AND CLEANING

Don't leave your splint near anything hot. The material used to make your splint, called thermoplastic, is shaped using heat. It will soften and may change shape again if heated.

Do not place your splint:

- On or near a hot stove or oven
- In front of a heating vent
- In very hot water (i.e. temperatures warmer than your hand can tolerate)
- On a window ledge in the sunshine (i.e. in a car, at home)
- In a clothes dryer

CLEANING: to clean your splint, hand-wash it in **lukewarm water** with a mild soap. Do not use strong cleaning solutions. Remove the straps from the splint and wash them in warm soapy water before laying them flat to dry.

AFTER DISCHARGE FROM OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY

Splint repair

If your splint needs a minor splint repair (e.g. replace strap), contact your Occupational Therapy to make arrangements for the repair to be done.

Splint adjustment / replacement

If your splint no longer fits comfortably or needs a major repair, and you have been seen in Occupational Therapy within the last 12 months, contact the scheduling desk to book a follow-up appointment.

If it has been more than 12 months since your last Occupational Therapy appointment, or if you need a new splint, you will need to get a new referral. Please arrange this through your family physician or rheumatologist.



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