Advice following an injection for trigger finger or thumb

Information for patients
The Sheffield Hand Centre
Why have I been given this leaflet?

You have been given this leaflet as you have had an injection to treat a trigger finger or thumb. In many cases this is the only treatment you will need. This means you are unlikely to be given a routine appointment to be seen again in The Sheffield Hand Centre.

We have provided the following information to help you understand what to expect and when to seek advice. We hope you will find this helpful and we wish you a good recovery.

What can I expect following my injection?

Your hand will be uncomfortable after the local anaesthetic wears off and you may need to take pain medication such as paracetamol to relieve the discomfort.

It is fairly common to experience pain during the first couple of days, but this should settle down after a few days.

Is there anything I can do to help my recovery?

It is important to move your wrist, fingers and thumb regularly after your injection even if they feel stiff.

Your hand may become swollen so it is important to keep it elevated above your heart whenever possible for the first couple of days. This will reduce the swelling and will also help to reduce any pain. You can elevate your hand by using a sling or by sitting with pillows or cushions so that your hand is level with your shoulder. You can also lie with your hand across your chest on a pillow or cushion.

What should I look out for after my injection?

Please contact the Hand Centre if you experience:

- Severe bruising and swelling
• Any signs of infection such as your finger or thumb becoming red, hot and swollen

If you develop an infection you may need treatment with antibiotics. Outside of working hours you should seek medical attention via a Walk-in Centre.

**Will I need to be off work?**

It is unusual for this type of treatment to lead to time off work but if your symptoms deteriorate following your steroid injection you may need to take some time to rest whilst it recovers. You can self-certify for sickness absence for up to 5 days. After that your GP can provide a certificate for you in the unlikely situation that you need a longer period off work.

**When can I return to normal activities?**

Your hand can be used for light activities immediately after the injection. You can build up to normal activities over the next few days.

**Can I drive after my injection?**

There is not usually any problem driving straight after the injection. If you are in pain afterwards it is advisable to wait until you are more comfortable. If you have any doubts you must check with your car insurance provider.

**What can I expect over the next few months?**

• About two thirds of patients with triggering are successfully treated with one injection.
• Up to three injections can be given in one course of treatment.
• Nine out of ten patients can be successfully treated with only injections.
• If the injections are not successful then surgery can be considered.
If you continue to have problems with your hand please see your GP who can arrange for further treatment or for a referral back to the Hand Centre.

**Who should I contact if I have any concerns or queries?**

If you have a problem or need advice after going home please contact:

The Sheffield Hand Centre

- **0114 305 2364**  
  Monday to Friday: 7.00am – 8.00pm  
  Saturday: 7.00am – 3.00pm

Outside of these hours when the Hand Centre is closed please ring:

The Surgical Assessment Centre

- **0114 226 9400**

Alternatively you can contact:

- Your GP
- Local Walk-in Centre
- NHS helpline on 111