



DR CHEN TU PROTOCOL GENERAL HAND SURGERY

Post-operative instructions



Protect the wound, control swelling and get the hand moving early.

DAY 0-2

PROTECT—ELEVATE—MOVE EARLY

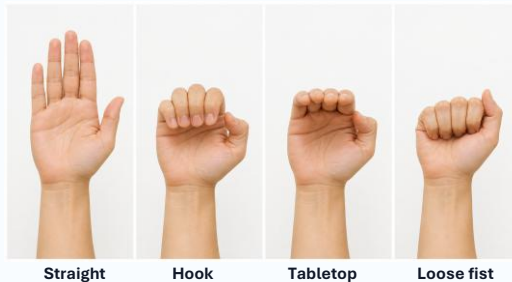
- Keep the dressing clean, dry and in place until instructed otherwise.
- Elevate the hand above heart level for 24–48 hours and whenever swollen.
- Start gentle finger and thumb movement today.
- Make a loose fist, then fully straighten—little and often.
- Use the hand for light tasks only.

Every 1–2 hours while awake:
5–10 gentle reps

Move comfortably
Do not force

IMPORTANT

- × No forceful grip or heavy lifting
 - × No pressure through the wound
 - × Do not wet or remove the dressing early
- Follow any splint or repair restrictions



Straight

Hook

Tabletop

Loose fist

DAY 2-14

WOUND CARE AND KEEP MOVING

- Leave the dressing on for the time written on your discharge instructions.
- Keep it dry; arrange a clean change if it becomes wet, loose or dirty.
- Absorbable sutures usually do not need removal.
- Continue finger and thumb exercises; add gentle wrist movement if allowed.
- Aim for comfortable motion—do not force through sharp pain.



Thumb away

Thumb across

Wrist gently

Your operation may need different protection. A cast, splint, tendon or bone instruction always overrides this general handout.

WHEN HEALED

RETURN TO FUNCTION GRADUALLY

- Once the wound is fully closed, wash normally and begin gentle scar massage.
- Build light daily use first: dressing, eating, typing and simple household tasks.
- Increase grip, lifting, gym, gardening and manual work gradually.
- Return to work depends on the operation and your job demands.
- Pain, swelling and wound tenderness should guide progression.



Elevate

Light use

Healed scar

Some swelling, stiffness and scar tenderness are normal early. Improvement often continues for several weeks or months.

TYPICAL MILESTONES

1

DRIVING

- Follow the timing advised for your operation.
- Grip and turn the wheel comfortably.
- React safely; no sedating medicine.

2

AT REVIEW

- Wound and dressing checked.
- Absorbable sutures usually stay in place.
- Confirm lifting, splint and therapy advice.

3

WOUND HEALED

- Dressing off when instructed.
- Wash normally; do not soak until fully healed.
- Start scar massage.
- Build light use and grip.

4

BUILD ACTIVITY

- Increase lifting and household tasks gradually.
- Add gym, gardening and manual work when permitted.

KEY POINTS TO REMEMBER



Keep dressing
clean and
dry



Move from
day 1



Absorbable
sutures



Build use
gradually

CONSIDER HAND THERAPY IF:

- fingers or thumb do not bend or straighten well
- swelling or stiffness limits normal use
- scar pain or sensitivity remains troublesome
- a splint or complex operation needs guidance