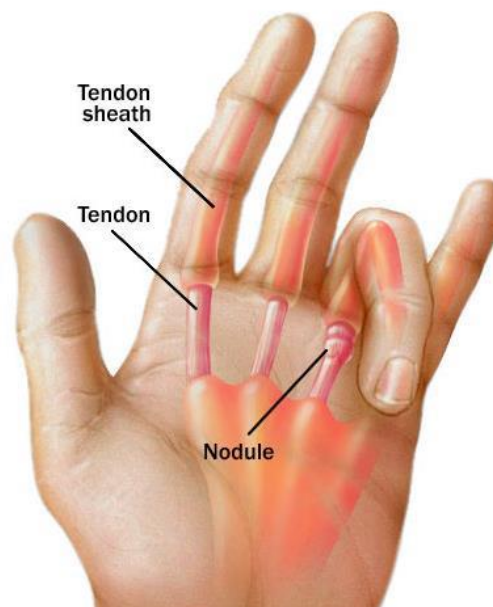

SELF-CARE INFORMATION ON TRIGGER FINGER

What is a Trigger Finger?

Trigger finger is a condition in which one of your fingers can become stuck in a bent position. Your finger may bend or straighten with a snap — like a trigger being pulled and released.

Trigger finger can occur when swelling and inflammation develop within the tendon or sheath (a protective tendon covering). This means that the tendon can no longer slide easily through the sheath and can bunch up to form a small lump (nodule). If trigger finger is severe, your finger may become locked into a bent position.

Trigger finger commonly occurs in the thumb, ring, and little fingers.



This condition is more prevalent in:

- Women
- People aged 40-50 years
- Conditions such as gout and diabetes
- After a previous hand injury

What are the symptoms of a Trigger Finger?

- Finger locking into a bent position
- Pain at the base of the finger
- Clicking
- Worse in the morning

How is it diagnosed?

Diagnosis is made from your symptoms, history, and an examination. Tests, such as X-rays or scans, are not usually required.

How is it treated?

- **Pain relief:** over the counter pain relief such as paracetamol and ibuprofen or anti-inflammatory gels may help you to continue exercising. A steroid injection may be offered if pain/locking persist (see below).
- **Exercises:** If you follow the advice and exercises on this leaflet, it is very likely that your symptoms will improve. However, this may take up to 12 weeks. If your symptoms do not improve after this period, please contact your clinician.

You may experience an initial increase in pain with these exercises. Do not worry, just do less repetitions next time and then gradually build up again.

1) Fully straighten fingers



2) Make a tabletop by bending the large knuckles and keeping the rest of the fingers straight. Return to start position.



3) Bend the tips of your fingers into a hook, whilst keeping the knuckles straight. Return to start position.



4) Make the tabletop positions and touch your palm keeping the end joints straight



- **Steroid injections.** If symptoms have not improved with physiotherapy, or if the pain is affecting your sleep, stopping you from performing everyday activities (such as getting dressed), or is limiting you from performing your physiotherapy exercises, you may want to consider a steroid injection: a small dose of corticosteroid (a strong anti-inflammatory drug) into the joint, which can reduce the pain and frequency of symptoms- discuss the with Dr Mawdsley who does these injections at the practice.

Useful contacts

If you need help with the exercises, then please self-refer to Physiotherapy using the below link:

<https://www.ghc.nhs.uk/our-teams-and-services/adult-physiotherapy/musculoskeletal-physiotherapy-self-referral-form/>

Other good sources of information include:

- Your pharmacist
- Patient UK - www.patient.co.uk
- NHS Choices, www.nhs.uk/conditions/

If you have further questions:

Call the **practice** on *01285 653184 or 01285 653122*

If you require **urgent** medical advice, call *111 (24 Hrs)*

In an **emergency** call **999**