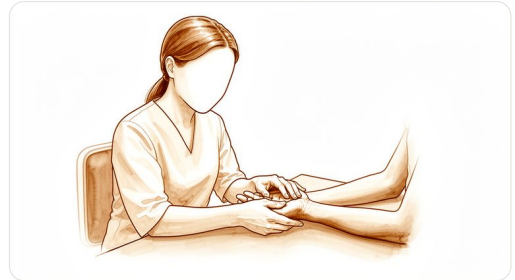


# Hand therapy basics

Hand therapy is a practical, hands-on partnership: the therapist moulds and adjusts a custom splint and teaches you the exercises that drive recovery between visits.

Kieran Hirpara 4.0



Hand therapy is physiotherapy and occupational therapy that focuses on the hand, wrist, and elbow. After most upper-limb surgeries you will see a hand therapist regularly – they are the people who turn a successful operation into a successful recovery.

## What hand therapists do

A hand therapist will:

- Remove and replace your dressings and check the wound
- Make a custom splint where one is needed (this is often moulded directly to your hand from a sheet of warm thermoplastic)
- Teach you exercises to keep stiffness down without overloading the repair
- Track your progress against a recovery timeline
- Tell your surgeon if something isn't healing the way it should

## How often will I go?

Most upper-limb operations involve 6–12 sessions over 3–6 months. The first appointment is usually within the first week or two after surgery once the dressing is changed. Sessions are typically 30–45 minutes.

## What does a session look like?

Sessions usually have three parts: checking the wound and any splint or sling, doing the exercises with the therapist watching technique, and upgrading your home exercise plan for the next week. You will also get specific guidance on what daily activities you can and can't do – using cutlery, writing, computer work, lifting.

## What good rehab looks like

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The right amount of effort is just enough that the area gets a little warm and a little tired, but doesn't swell up overnight or hurt for hours afterwards. If exercises hurt, that is information – tell your therapist; they will adjust the dose. Pain is not the goal.