

Hand Therapy

Oedema management

What is oedema?

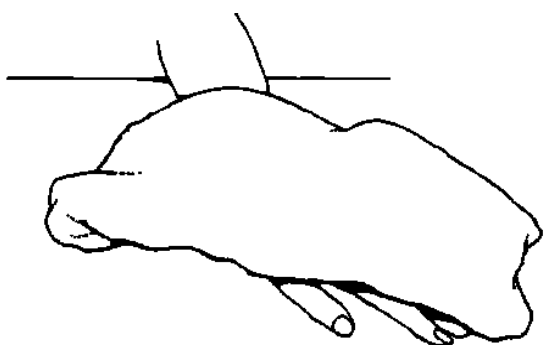
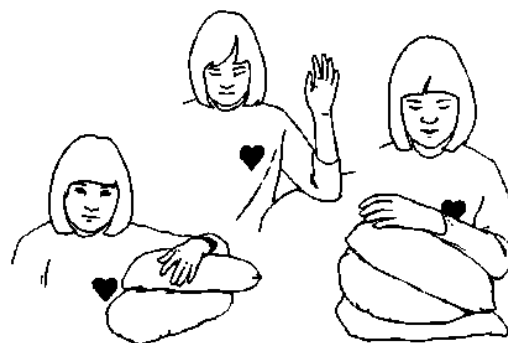
Oedema (swelling) can occur after an injury or surgery. Sometimes your arm / hand can stay swollen for longer than expected. **Swelling can cause pain and stiffness** and can slow down your recovery. If the swelling stays for too long it can be difficult to remove. **It is better to prevent the swelling.**

How can I prevent or reduce swelling?

The program below can help to prevent or reduce swelling in your arm/hand. Your therapist will tell you which treatments to do.

Elevation

Make sure your arm / hand is higher than your heart. Use pillows to help support your arm. Change the position of your elbow often.



Ice

Place a bag of frozen peas, an ice pack or crushed ice wrapped in a towel over the swollen part. Apply for up to 20 minutes.

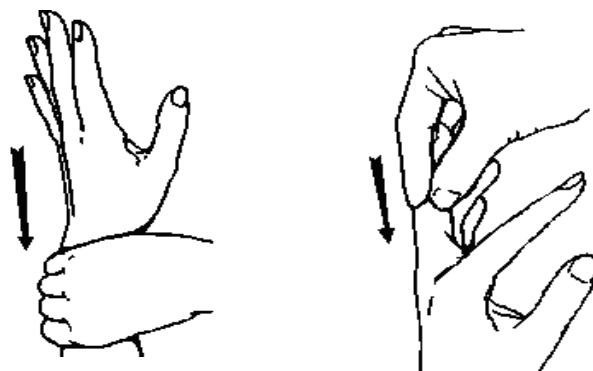
Before using ice talk to your therapist if you have reduced feeling in your hand / fingers.



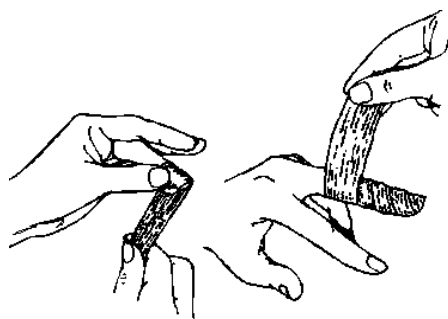
Massage

With your fingers pointing to the ceiling, massage your forearm. Start at your wrist and make long strokes down towards the elbow. Then stroke each finger down towards the wrist. Then again stroke from your wrist to your elbow.

Make sure the massage is soft (like stroking a cat). Always massage towards the elbow.

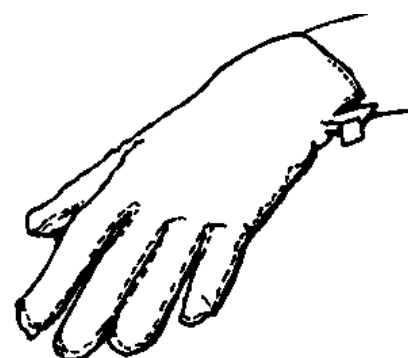


Compression



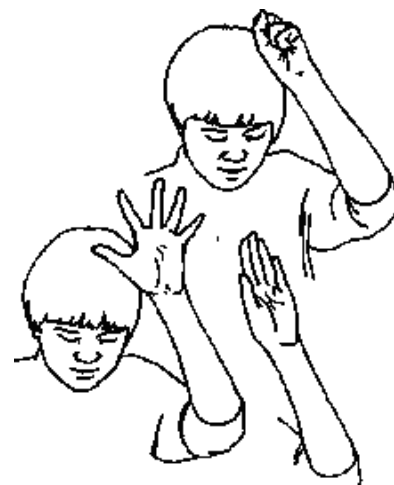
A compression bandage or glove may help reduce swelling. Your therapist will tell what is best for you.

If the bandage or glove causes **pain, numbness or tingling** in your hand / arm, remove it and talk to your therapist as soon as possible.



Exercises

Exercises move the muscles in your hand, which help to push the swelling back towards the heart. Only do the exercises your therapist has given you. Make sure your hand is up above heart level when you do your exercises.



Please contact your therapist if you have any queries or concerns.

Therapist _____ Phone Number _____

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