

# Mallet finger (English)

**This leaflet provides you with information about a mallet finger. You should know that your personal situation may differ from the one described here.**

You have a mallet finger, which means that the tip of the finger lies in a bent position and you are unable to straighten it. You have snapped the tendon that normally straightens the end of the finger. The tendon may even have pulled off a small fragment of the bone.

## Summary

- The tip of your finger lies in a bent position and you are unable to straighten it. This is called a mallet finger.
- This type of injury almost always heals well without any loss of function.
- A routine follow-up is not necessary for this type of injury.
- The mallet finger can occur with or without a fracture, make sure you follow the treatment schedule appropriate for your injury.
- You must wear the splint continuously, 24 hours a day; nonstop.
- You can find more information in the folder or the app: Virtual Fracture Care, Adrz.

If you have any questions or are experiencing problems with your recovery, you can call the Breuklijn: 088 125 4202 (+3188 125 4202).

## Treatment

A mallet finger is a common injury, in most cases an operation is not necessary. You will be treated with a splint.

There are two ways to get a splint:

- You visited the Emergency Department during office hours.  
You will get a personalized splint at the "Gipskamer" (plaster room) to keep the finger straight.
- You visited the Emergency Department outside office hours.
  - You will get a temporary splint.
  - An appointment at the Gipskamer (plaster room) will be made for you for the next workday, where a personalized splint will be made.

The treatment of a mallet finger with a loose bone fragment (fracture) is different from a mallet finger without a loose bone fragment (i.e. only tendon injury). The doctor at the emergency department will inform you about your specific type of injury.

## Treatment of a mallet finger with a fracture

### 0-6 weeks

- Continuously wear the splint. Do not take it off, at all.

### 6-8 weeks

- You can start exercises
- Wear the splint during the night and when your finger is at risk of injury.

## Treatment of a mallet finger without a fracture (tendon injury)

### 0-8 weeks

- Continuously wear the splint. Do not take it off, at all.

### 8-10 weeks

- You can start exercises.
- Wear the splint during the night and when your finger is at risk of injury.

## Instructions

Follow these instructions for a good recovery.

- You have to wear the splint at all times (24 hours a day).
- It is very important that you do not remove the splint. If you remove the splint before your hand-therapist advises you to do so, your recovery up to that point will be undone and the chance of a complete recovery will decrease.
  - If you have a tendon injury, you have to wear the splint for 8 weeks.
  - If you have a tendon injury with a loose bone fragment, you have to wear the splint for 6 weeks.
- After these 6 weeks (bone fragment + tendon injury) or 8 weeks (isolated tendon injury), you have to wear the splint during the night for 2 more weeks.
- In the course of these 2 weeks, also wear the splint during the day whenever your finger is at risk of injury.
- Your finger and the splint should not get wet, as this will cause irritation of the skin.
- Are you in pain? Use a mild pain killer such as paracetamol (acetaminophen). Do not wait with the use of paracetamol until the pain is too much.

## Recovery

- Be careful to gradually resume daily activities and do not make any sudden movements with your injured finger. This can damage the tendon.
- Most mallet injuries heal after 3 months.

## When to contact us?

If you have any questions, please contact the the Breuklijn (fracture hotline) 088 125 4202 (+3188 125 4202). If follow-up is necessary, we will make an appointment for you. Also contact the Breuklijn when:

- Your pain increases.
- The tip of your finger bends again when you have started doing the exercises.
- The splint does not fit anymore.
- The splint needs to be cleaned.

## Replace the splint

You should never replace the splint yourself. When the splint does not fit anymore contact the Breuklijn (fracture hotline) 088 125 4202 (+3188 125 4202).

## Questions?

If there are any questions after reading the information, please contact us or visit [www.adrz.nl](http://www.adrz.nl)

## Contact

Please call us: Breuklijn (fracture hotline) 088 125 4202 (+3188 125 4202). Monday – Friday: 8.30 am – 10.30 am.