

## Splinting following Needle Release for Dupuytren's Disease

Splinting may be helpful following needle release for Dupuytren's Contracture, depending on the nature of the contracture and the results immediately following release, as in these situations:

- \* Following release of isolated PIP contractures
- \* Following release if there is residual "springiness" of a joint - that is, if the joint can be gently pushed more straight than it can be straightened by simply spreading and straightening the fingers
- \* Following release of stage III or IV contractures

There are many types of splints and braces, including prefabricated splints and custom thermoplastic splints made by hand therapists. Generally, such splints are worn while sleeping and intermittently when up and about for three months after needle release. The following method is a useful splinting alternative following needle release of Dupuytren's contracture using a prefabricated wrist splint.

A prefabricated wrist splint can be used in a reversed position. The splint should be:

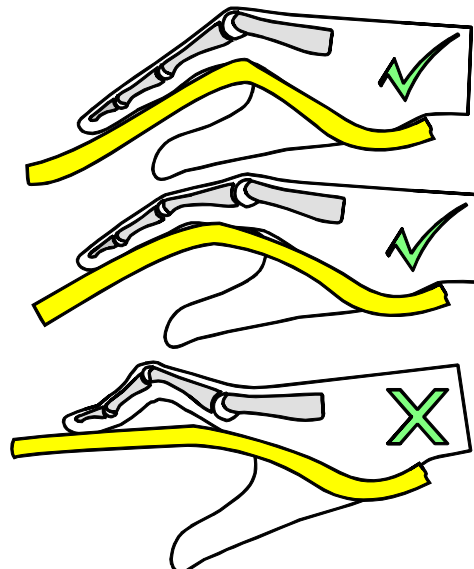
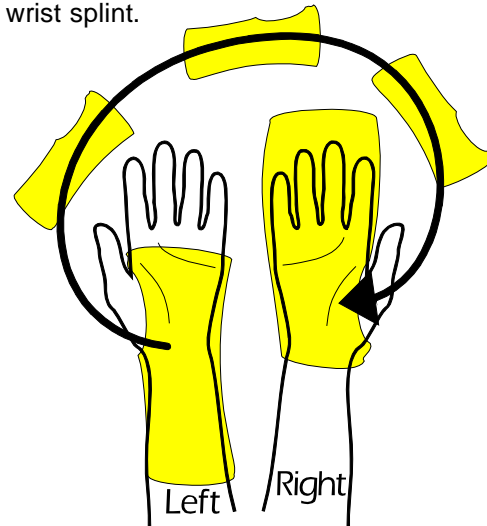
- \* Short rather than long.
- \* Constructed of a non-elastic material rather than a stretchy fabric.
- \* Supported by internal struts which can be bent and adjusted.
- \* Designed for use on the opposite wrist.

The splint is worn backwards and on the opposite hand. As such, the intended wrist section supports the fingers.

Bend the shaping struts in the splint to support the fingers. The splint fit is important:

- \* The MCP joints should be somewhat bent.
- \* The PIP joints should be supported in comfortable extension.
- \* It should be tight enough that it does not fall off during the night.
- \* It should be loose enough to wear overnight without:
  - o making the fingers swell.
  - o becoming uncomfortable.

The splint needs to be adjusted by bending the shaping struts as shown above. Otherwise, it will tend to push too much on the MCP and DIP joints and not enough on the PIP joints, as shown to the right:



This approach is an alternative to other splinting techniques and may or may not work for you. There is no single approach to splinting which works for everyone - it is helpful to have options.

Good luck!