
DR BOB JANG

Orthopaedic Surgeon

Distal interphalangeal joint arthrodesis/Finger Fusion Information Sheet and Post-Operative Guidelines

Introduction: Finger fusion, also known as arthrodesis, is a surgical procedure performed to permanently join two or more bones within a finger joint. This procedure is typically recommended to treat severe arthritis, instability, or deformity in the finger joint that hasn't responded to conservative treatments. Following finger fusion surgery, it's essential to adhere to specific post-operative guidelines to optimise healing and promote the best possible outcome.

Pre-Operative Preparation: Before undergoing finger fusion surgery, Dr. Jang will perform a comprehensive evaluation to assess your medical history, the severity of your condition, and your candidacy for the procedure. Pre-operative preparations may include medical tests, imaging studies, and discussions about the surgery, risks, benefits, and expected outcomes.

Surgical Procedure: During finger fusion surgery, Dr. Jang will remove damaged cartilage from the affected joint surfaces and position the bones in the desired alignment. Surgical hardware, such as screws or plates, may be used to stabilise the joint while fusion occurs. Over time, the bones will fuse together, creating a solid union and eliminating motion at the joint.

Post-Operative Guidelines:

Immediate Post-Operative Phase (Days 1-14):

Pain Management:

- Take prescribed pain medication as directed by Dr. Jang to manage post-operative discomfort.
- Apply ice packs to the surgical site intermittently to reduce swelling and alleviate pain.

Wound Care:

- Keep the surgical incision clean and dry as per Dr. Jang 's instructions.
- Monitor the incision site for signs of infection, such as redness, swelling, warmth, or drainage.

Immobilisation:

- Wear a protective splint or cast as recommended by Dr. Jang to immobilise the fused finger joint.
- Follow instructions regarding the duration and circumstances for splint or cast removal.

Activity Restrictions:

- Refrain from using the affected finger for activities during the initial healing phase.
- Adhere to specific activity restrictions provided by Dr. Jang to prevent stress on the fused joint.

Hand therapy:

- Initiate gentle range of motion exercises for adjacent joints as instructed by Dr. Jang or hand therapist.
- Perform prescribed exercises to prevent stiffness and maintain flexibility in surrounding joints.

Follow-up Appointments:

- Schedule and attend follow-up appointments with Dr Jang as recommended for wound checks and evaluation of progress.

Intermediate Post-Operative Phase (Weeks 2-6):

Gradual Resumption of Activities:

- Continue to protect the fused finger joint and avoid using it for activities.



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- Gradually increase activities of daily living as tolerated, using adjacent fingers for tasks if necessary.

Physical Therapy Progression:

- Continue with prescribed range of motion exercises for adjacent joints.
- Gradually incorporate strengthening exercises for the surrounding muscles and joints under the guidance of a therapist.

Wound Healing:

- Monitor wound healing progress and report any concerns to Dr Jang.
- Adhere to any additional wound care instructions provided.

Splint/Cast Management:

- Follow instructions regarding the transition out of splints or casts as directed by Dr Jang.
- Gradually reintroduce functional activities with caution, protecting the fused finger joint as necessary.

Advanced Post-Operative Phase (Weeks 6-12 and Beyond):

Functional Rehabilitation:

- Focus on restoring functional use of the hand while protecting the fused finger joint.
- Progress strengthening exercises for the surrounding muscles and joints.
- Explore adaptive techniques for activities that may be impacted by the fused joint.

Return to Normal Activities:

- Gradually resume normal activities and work duties as tolerated, with appropriate modifications to protect the fused finger joint.
- Avoid activities that place excessive stress on the fused joint.

Long-Term Follow-up:

- Continue periodic follow-up appointments with Dr Jang to monitor progress and address any ongoing concerns.
- Seek guidance regarding the progression of activities and any modifications needed for long-term hand health.

Conclusion: Following finger fusion surgery, diligent adherence to post-operative guidelines is essential for a successful recovery and optimal outcomes. It's crucial to communicate openly with Dr Jang and healthcare team, follow their recommendations, and report any concerns or complications promptly. By actively participating in your recovery process, you can promote healing, regain function, and improve your quality of life.

Contact Information: If you have any questions, concerns, or need to schedule an appointment, please contact Dr Jang at the following:

- Phone: 02 8078 6621, 02 9525 2055
- Email: admin@drbobjang.com.au or reception@orthocentre.com.au
- Address: Caringbah/Bankstown/Strathfield.

Disclaimer: This patient information sheet is for educational purposes only and does not replace the advice and guidance of a qualified healthcare professional. Individual cases may vary, and treatment options may differ based on specific circumstances. Always consult your physician for accurate diagnosis and personalised treatment plans. Dr Jang is committed to providing exceptional care and support throughout your recovery journey. We wish you a speedy recovery and improved health.



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