

Finger Fractures

Diagnosis Explanation:

A **finger fracture** occurs when one of the **phalanges (finger bones)** is broken due to **trauma, falls, sports injuries, or direct impact**. Fractures can be **stable (aligned)** or **displaced (misaligned)** and may involve the **joint surface** in more severe cases.

Types of Finger Fractures:

- **Stable Fracture:** Bone remains aligned, usually heals with splinting.
- **Displaced Fracture:** Bone pieces are misaligned and may require reduction or surgery.
- **Comminuted Fracture:** Bone breaks into multiple pieces.
- **Intra-Articular Fracture:** Break extends into the joint, potentially causing stiffness.

Symptoms:

- **Severe pain and swelling** in the affected finger.
- **Bruising and tenderness** around the injury site.
- **Limited movement or inability to grip objects.**
- **Visible deformity (in displaced fractures).**

Specific Work Modifications:

- **If your job involves typing or writing:** Use **voice dictation software**, take **frequent hand-stretching breaks**, and consider an **ergonomic keyboard**.
- **If your job requires manual labor:** Avoid **gripping, pulling, or using vibrating tools**. Use **adaptive hand tools with larger grips** if needed.
- **If your job is desk-based:** Keep the **hand elevated** to reduce swelling, and use a **soft keyboard rest**.
- **Avoid:** Heavy lifting, repetitive gripping, and activities that put stress on the injured finger.

Specific Activity Modifications:

- **If you play sports:** Avoid **ball-handling sports (basketball, volleyball, tennis) and contact sports** until fully healed.
- **If you play an instrument:** Modify technique and use **adaptive grips**.
- **If you do crafting, gardening, or cooking:** Use **larger-handled tools** to reduce strain.
- **Avoid:** High-impact activities, repetitive hand movements, and forceful gripping.

Recommended Supplements:

- **Calcium & Vitamin D** - 1000mg/800 IU daily for bone healing.
- **Collagen Peptides** - 10g daily to support bone and soft tissue repair.
- **Magnesium** - 300-400mg daily for bone strength and muscle relaxation.
- **Omega-3 Fatty Acids** - 1000mg daily to reduce inflammation.
- **Turmeric (Curcumin)** - 500-1000mg daily for pain relief.

Recommended Nutrition and Hydration:

- **Increase Lean Protein** (chicken, fish, tofu, eggs) to aid bone and muscle healing.
- **Eat Bone-Strengthening Foods** (leafy greens, dairy, nuts, seeds) to support fracture repair.
- **Consume Anti-Inflammatory Foods** (berries, turmeric, green tea) to reduce swelling.
- **Limit Processed Foods & Sugars** to prevent inflammation.
- **Hydration:** Drink **8-10 cups of water daily** to support bone regeneration.

Home Exercise Prescription (Rehabilitation for Finger Fracture)

Early Phase (0-2 Weeks, Protecting the Finger & Reducing Pain):

- **Splinting** - Wear a **finger splint for 2-6 weeks**, as directed by your doctor.
- **RICE Protocol** - Rest, Ice (15-20 min, 3x/day), Compression, Elevation.
- **Passive Finger Flexion & Extension** - Use the opposite hand to **gently bend and straighten** the finger, **10 reps, 2x/day**.

Strengthening Phase (2-6 Weeks, Restoring Mobility & Function):

- **Towel Scrunches** - Place a towel on a flat surface, use fingers to scrunch it, **10 reps, 2x/day**.
- **Finger Lifts** - Place hand flat, lift each finger individually, **10 reps per finger, 2x/day**.
- **Rubber Band Finger Extensions** - Wrap a rubber band around fingers, open hand against resistance, **10 reps, 2x/day**.

Advanced Phase (6+ Weeks, Preventing Recurrence & Maintaining Function):

- **Grip Strengthening (Soft Ball Squeeze)** - Squeeze a soft ball **5 seconds, repeat 10 reps, 2x/day**.
- **Finger-to-Thumb Opposition** - Touch thumb to each fingertip, **10 reps, 2x/day**.
- **Wrist Circles** - Slowly rotate wrists in both directions, **10 reps, 2x/day**.

Helpful Books:

1. *The Hand and Wrist Pain Solution: Simple Exercises for Relief* - Dr. Ross Clifford.
2. *Arthritis and Hand Therapy: A Self-Help Guide to Managing Joint Pain* - Susan J. Barnhart, PT.

Click here for more orthopedic patient information.

Contact a Key West orthopedic clinic or reach out to Dr. Jason Pirozzolo.