

What is my diagnosis?

You have a small break near the end of your finger which stops the finger being straight. This is called a **mallet finger injury**.

Almost all of these injuries heal fully **without the need for any intervention or surgery**. It is important that this injury is treated correctly to achieve a good outcome. Your finger must be kept straight in the splint provided **at all times** for the next 6 weeks.



What happens next?

- Your X-rays and notes will be checked by a Consultant Orthopaedic Surgeon

If nothing further is needed, we will not contact you

- If any other treatment or assessment is needed we will contact you by telephone or post
- Please ensure the Emergency Department/Minor Injury Unit reception staff have your mobile and phone home numbers.

What can I expect during my recovery?

Weeks 1-2

- The tip of the finger will be painful but simple pain killers such as paracetamol and ibuprofen can be taken to manage your pain.
- It is important to move the knuckle and middle joint of the finger to avoid stiffness.

Weeks 2-6

- The pain will begin to improve but you should continue to use the splint **at all times** except when washing your finger (see “**Managing your splint**” overleaf).

Weeks 7-8

- The splint can be removed during the day but should still be used overnight and during sports for the next 2 weeks.
- The finger should be straight, although a small droop may remain
- The finger may be stiff and swollen for several more weeks
- If you have concerns after 8 weeks, please get in touch using the details overleaf

Patient Information Sheet – 70E

Mallet Finger Injury

What do I need to know?

Managing your splint

your finger you must keep the finger straight and use the support or sink. If the tip of your finger bends during treatment, your may not heal properly.



To wash
o f a **table**
tendon

What if I have a problem?

It is extremely uncommon for this injury not to heal. However, some patients are left with a small droop at the tip of the finger. This does not affect the function of your finger and hand and surgery is rarely needed. If you have any issues beyond **12 weeks** after injury please contact us on the details below.

Get in touch

Please get in touch via our trauma email if you have any queries about your injury:

traumaenquiriesRIE@nhslothian.scot.nhs.uk

Helpline Monday-Friday (8am – 4pm): 0131 242 3410

Urgent issues

Please call the department where you were initially seen about your injury:

- **RIE Minor Injuries Unit:** 0131 242 3942 (8am – midnight, if after midnight contact RIE Emergency Department 0131 242 1300)
- **WGH Minor Injuries Clinic:** 0131 537 3468 (9am – 8.30pm)
- **SJH Emergency Department:** 01506 523 011 (24 hours)