

# Splints for Thumb Base Arthritis

## Information for patients

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### Background

Your GP has referred you to the Hand Surgery Unit with pain at the base of your thumb. Based on the information from your GP, it is likely to be Thumb Base Arthritis caused by Osteoarthritis (wear and tear of the joints). This information sheet explains where to obtain thumb base splints that should help with your discomfort.

### Educational Video

Please visit the website <https://vimeo.com/482676602> to access online the free Thumb Base Pain Education Presentation video produced by our Hand Therapy team which will give you more information about thumb base arthritis and provides you with advice on how to manage it independently.

### Management with splints

Many patients with osteoarthritis of the thumb base find the use of a splint helps reduce their pain, and improve the use of the hand. No matter what level of pain you have, it is safe to try using a splint.

There are different types of splints available. Your splint should look like one of the splints in the photographs on the next page. The **thumb spica splint** is a bit more rigid, as it has a metal bar supporting the thumb. This metal bar can easily be removed if it feels uncomfortable to you. Splints made from neoprene are softer. The **wrist thumb support splint** is shorter and less restrictive; whereas the **thumb restriction splint** is more restrictive but offers more support.

Different people find different splints helpful. There is no “one size fits all” with splints. You may find that you need to try a couple of different options to find the one that works for you.

### Where to buy your splint

Splints can generally be bought at “mobility shops” and there are several in the Edinburgh and the Lothians. We suggest you phone ahead to see if they have stock but the retail team can order a splint for you if they do not have stock.

Alternatively, thumb base splints can be bought through online retailers. Searching for “thumb base splint arthritis” will give you many options. Currently the cost of a splint is approximately £10.00.

Make sure you order the correct sided splint for your Right or Left hand and ensure you are ordering the correct size. Most retailers and websites will have instructions for measuring your hand.

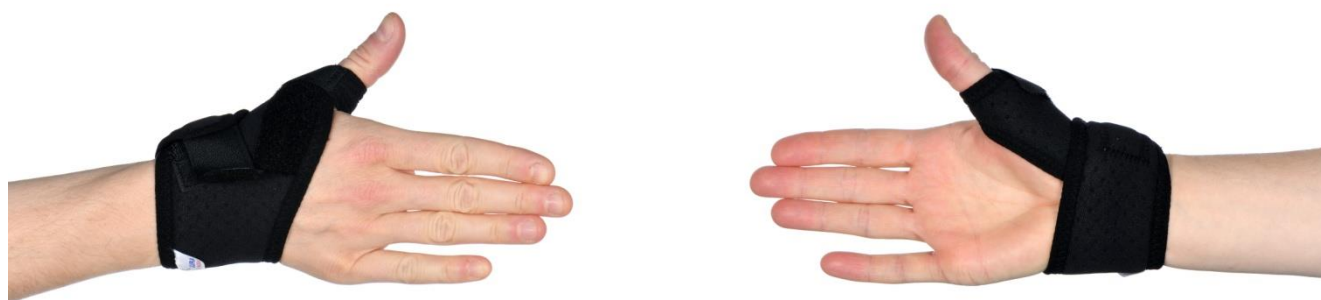
**Remember your splint should not increase your pain, but should increase your ability to use your hand. If it increases pain or causes redness, irritation or tingling, please remove it and stop using it.**

## Examples of splints

### Thumb spica splint



### Wrist thumb support splint



### Thumb restriction splint



## Contact details

If you feel that the description in this leaflet does not fit with your symptoms, or if you feel that your symptoms are too severe to wait for up to 6 months, then please contact us on **01506 523 128**.