

Patient information

Advice for Patients with Loss of Protective Sensation Following Nerve Injury or Repair

Therapies Department

The advice below is intended to reduce the risk of damage to skin that has lost its protective sensation and early warning pain mechanism.

It is important that you are aware of things that may cause damage.

1. Avoid exposure of the involved area to:

- excessive or prolonged heat (e.g. when cooking, smoking)
- cold
- friction (steering wheel when driving, screw drivers etc.)
- pressure (small surface area of skin in contact)
- sharp objects.

2. Observe where your hand is at all times.

3. Observe the skin regularly for 'signs of stress' or pressure marks e.g. redness, swelling, warmth, blisters, especially if you are wearing a splint, after activity and if you are working with your hand out of sight.

Warmth can be tested by touching the area of use to your lips as they are very sensitive. Be extra cautious if your whole arm is numb and check both front and back.

4. Be careful not to apply more force than necessary when gripping tools or objects.

5. Try to avoid using small handles by building them up whenever possible, to avoid pressure areas. Your occupational therapist will help you with this.

6. Avoid tasks that require the use of one tool for long periods of time, or tasks that require repetitive activity.

7. Change tools frequently at work to prevent pressure areas.

8. If blisters or wounds occur, treat them with care to avoid further injury and possible infection. If you are concerned contact your doctor or therapist.

9. Keep your skin in good condition by following a daily routine of skin care including soaking and cream massage (your therapist will discuss this with you).

Feedback

Your feedback is important to us and helps us influence care in the future. Following your discharge from hospital or attendance at your outpatient appointment you will receive a text asking if you would recommend our service to others. Please take the time to text back, you will not be charged for the text and can opt out at any point. Your co-operation is greatly appreciated

Further information

Hand Therapy Unit

Royal Liverpool Hospital site

Tel: 0151 706 2760

Text phone number: 18001 0151 706 2760

Hand Therapy Unit

Broadgreen Hospital site

Tel: 0151 282 6276

Text phone number: 18001 0151 282 6276

Author: Hand Therapy - Therapies Department

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