

# Volar Plate Injury

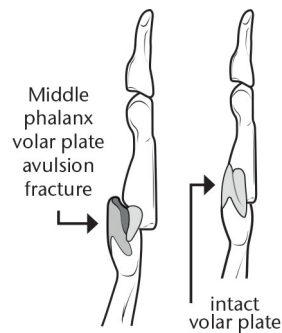
Information for patients



## VOLAR PLATE INJURY

You have injured a ligament in your finger called the volar plate. It often occurs from an impact where your finger is forced back, such as a ball hitting the tip of the finger and pushing the joint backwards. This stretches the volar plate at the middle joint of the finger (PIP joint) and can even cause a small fracture (break) at the base of the middle bone of the finger.

The volar plate can also be injured if the joint dislocates. Your finger will take approximately 3 months to be strong again and will need you to work hard at your exercises to gain full movement.



There are various methods to treat this injury depending on how stable your joint is.

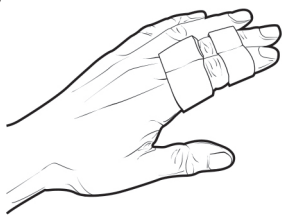


Image A

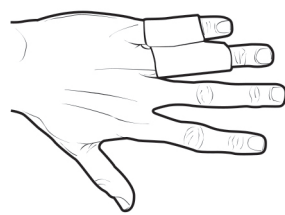


Image B

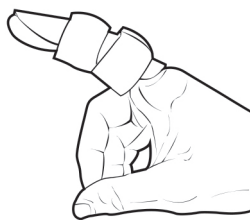


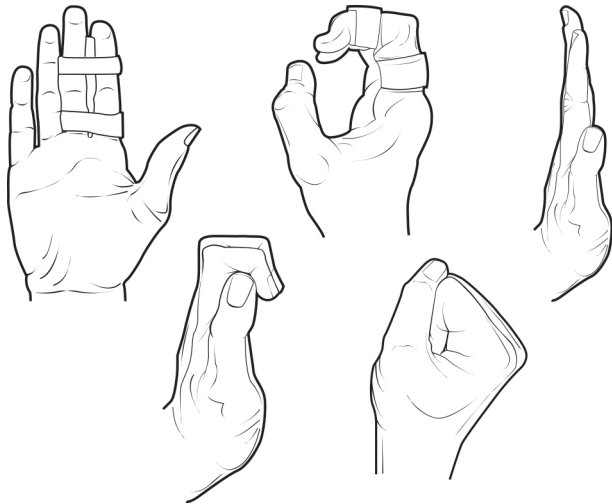
Image C

For a minor injury buddy strapping or a Bedford splint (image A and B) can be used to protect your finger and acts like a splint.

This is done by strapping your finger to the adjacent one. It also allows you to move your fingers which is very important but will protect your finger from being forced back whilst your finger is healing. The tape should allow your joints to move. If it is too thick it can be cut to size to allow movement. Some people may need their finger splinted with a thermoplastic splint, see image C. If this is required you will be referred to Hand Therapy.

You will be advised which fingers to strap together. The strapping needs to be secure so that it keeps both fingers together as you bend and straighten them but not so tight as to cause an increase in your swelling or to cut off your circulation. A piece of soft gauze can be placed between the fingers to absorb any sweat and to stop them from getting sore by rubbing. You can change the strapping daily to freshen up your hand. Reapply the strapping immediately after you have done this. For the first 2 - 3 weeks wear buddy strapping continuously. Once the swelling has settled and the pain subsides remove the strapping and ensure you are regaining full movement of your finger. If you feel you need continued protection you can continue strapping in the situations you may need it.

The following exercises should be carried out whilst your fingers are strapped:



Rehabilitation timescales:

Weeks 0-3	Maintain strapping/splinting and exercise fingers as above. Avoid forceful activities to allow your finger to heal.
Weeks 3-6	Continue working on regaining full movement of your finger and gradually increase activities.
Weeks 6-12	The injury should have healed around 12 weeks. Return to all activities. You may have swelling and pain for a longer period. It should not be severe pain.

**If you still have problems moving your finger 4 weeks after your injury please get in touch with your local Hand Therapy Department, see below numbers.**

Only patients who have previously been treated for this injury at the Emergency Department will be able to refer in.

University Hospital Monklands:  
01698 752088

University Hospital Hairmyres:  
01355 585429



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