

PATIENT INFORMATION – DUPUYTREN'S CONTRACTURE

What is it?

Dupuytren's disease is an abnormal thickening of the fascia (the tissue between the skin and the tendons in the palm) that may limit movement of one or more fingers.

Signs and symptoms:

First sign is often a small lump or pit in the palm, which gradually thickens and extends down the fingers. Thickening of the fascia can pull fingers towards the palm as it shortens. Eventually the hand may not be able to be placed flat on a surface such as a table. Having the disease in both hands is common & can also occur in soles of feet.

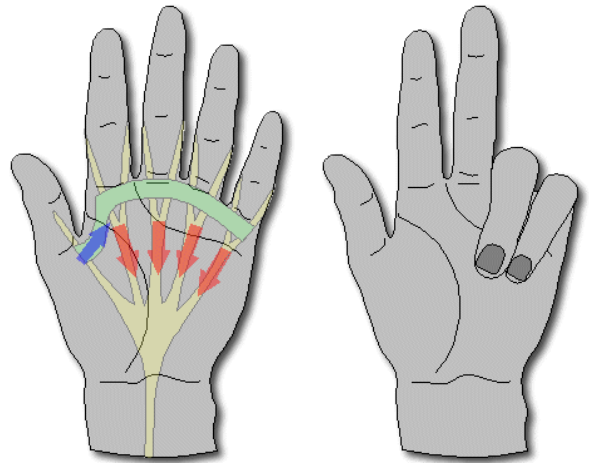


Fig 1a) New palmer nodule



b) Contracture of ring finger

Cause:

The cause of Dupuytren's is unknown. It predominantly affects people of Northern European descent, occurs more often in men than women and usually starts after the age of 40. Trauma or injuries to the hand have not been directly linked to the condition.

Treatment:

The only treatment for this condition is surgery. Surgery can relieve the bending of the fingers into the palm, but the condition can return with time. Your doctor should advise you on whether surgery is recommended in your case.

How can Hand Therapy help?

Hand Therapy is very important after Dupuytren's surgery. Your therapist may make a splint to maintain the finger(s) in extension, give you exercises to improve your hand motion, and help with swelling and scar management. Please contact us directly if you have any further questions or concerns.