

Exercises for stiff fingers

Many people with arthritis in their hands find that they struggle to do daily activities due to stiffness in their fingers. Below are a set of exercises that you might find helps your hands to become more mobile.

You should always build up new activities slowly. You may experience mild discomfort whilst performing these exercises. If this persists, stop immediately and consult your doctor, an osteopath or a physiotherapist. Don't force through the pain. These exercises are intended to be gentle. However, if you have any concerns about whether they are suitable for you, please consult a healthcare professional before taking part.

For more information, visit: www.arthritisaction.org.uk

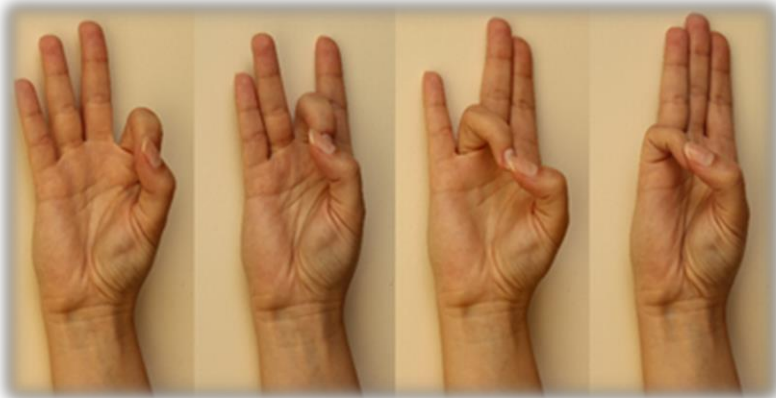


Thumb toggling

- Hold the base of the affected thumb between the finger and thumb of the other hand
- Gently pull along the length of the thumb and circle it clockwise for one minute
- Repeat anticlockwise for one minute
- Repeat as required



Thumb/finger apposition



Initial exercises



Progression

Reaching the thumb across the hand to touch the fingers (apposition) is essential to allow us to grip, but this can become difficult if you have arthritis in your thumb:

- Start by touching the tip of your index finger with the tip of your thumb and press gently for 1 second
- Next touch the middle finger, ring finger and little finger with the tip of your thumb in turn. Repeat 10 times
- If you are able to do this easily, repeat this exercise, but instead of touching the tip of the finger, aim for the middle joint
- If this becomes easy, try to touch the lowest joint on each of the fingers



Thumb circles

- With the affected thumb outstretched, rotate the thumb clockwise for one minute
- Repeat anticlockwise for one minute
- Repeat as required