



Boulder
Community
Health

Exercise Program

EXERCISES FOR ARTHRITIS IN THE HAND AND WRIST

Outpatient Rehabilitation (303) 415-4400

Provided for

RELIEF FOR HAND OR WRIST ARTHRITIS LECTURE PARTICIPANTS

HAND THERAPY TREATMENT PRINCIPLES FOR MANAGING ARTHRITIS

1. **EXERCISE** helps to improve range of motion and strength and decrease arthritis symptoms.
 2. **WARMTH / HEAT** helps to loosen stiff joints and relax muscles.
 3. **SPLINTS and BRACES** help to protect and support the joints.
 4. **JOINT PROTECTION / ACTIVITY MODIFICATION / ENERGY CONSERVATION** help to reduce overuse of the arthritic joints.
 5. **ADAPTIVE EQUIPMENT** helps to prevent further injury and to retain good use of your hands in daily tasks with less pain.
-



©PhysioTools Ltd

EXERCISES

1. Wrist Bends: Flexion and Extension

Place your arms straight out in front of you with your palms down. Bend wrists down into flexion. Hold for 5 seconds. Next, extend wrists up. Hold for 5 seconds. Repeat 10 times.

2. Wrist Circles

Rotate wrists in loose circles in both directions. Repeat 10 times.



©PhysioTools Ltd

3. Finger Stretches

Open your hands so your fingers are straight and spread apart. Hold for 5 seconds. Next, gently curl your fingers into a soft fist with thumbs over the fingers. Hold for 5 seconds. Repeat 10 times.

**4. Palm on Table - Finger Extension**

Place palms down flat on a table. Lift each finger up and down off the table one at a time. Repeat 10 times.

©PhysioTools Ltd

**5. Palm on Table - Thumb Out and In**

Place palms down flat on a table with your thumb in next to your index finger. Gently slide your thumb out and away from your index finger. Hold for 5 seconds. Repeat 10 times.

©PhysioTools Ltd

6. "C"

Make a "C" with your fingers and thumb. Hold for 5 seconds. Open fingers straight. Repeat 10 times.

7. "O"

Make an "O" with your fingers and thumb. Hold for 5 seconds. Open fingers straight. Repeat 10 times.

8. Thumb Joystick

Make a loose fist and set your fist on a table, pinky side down. Extend your thumb up to the ceiling. Use your opposite hand to hold your thumb like a joystick. Gently stretch your thumb back towards you moving from the base of your thumb. Repeat 10 times.

9. Thumb Rolls

Make a loose fist with your pinky side down. Hold your straight thumb over your index finger and roll your thumb to the right and the left. Repeat 10 times.

**10. Pinky Slides with Thumb**

Open your hand and touch the tip of your pinky finger with your thumb. Gently slide your thumb down into your palm. Repeat 10 times.

©PhysioTools Ltd

**11. Tennis Ball**

Place a tennis ball in your palm at the base of your thumb and gently lay your thumb over the ball in neutral alignment. Press your thumb against the ball. Hold for 5 seconds as tolerated. Repeat 5-10 times.

As you progress, try to hold the ball with your thumb, ring and pinky fingers, allowing the index and middle fingers to be extended like bunny ears.

©The Saunders Group Inc.