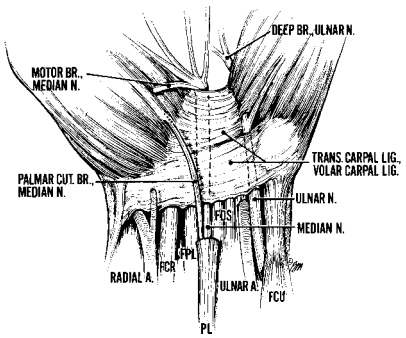
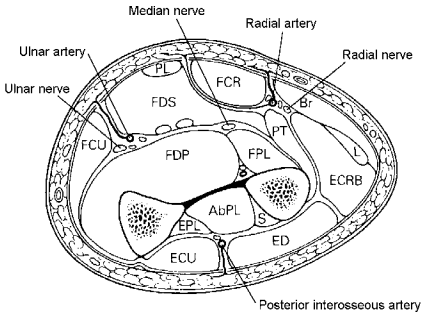
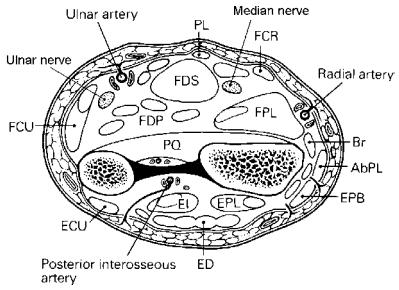
WRIST LACERATION

You have just had a wrist tendon and/or nerve repaired. The area is very complex as you can see from the diagrams. Your surgeon and therapist will explain precisely which structures have been repaired.

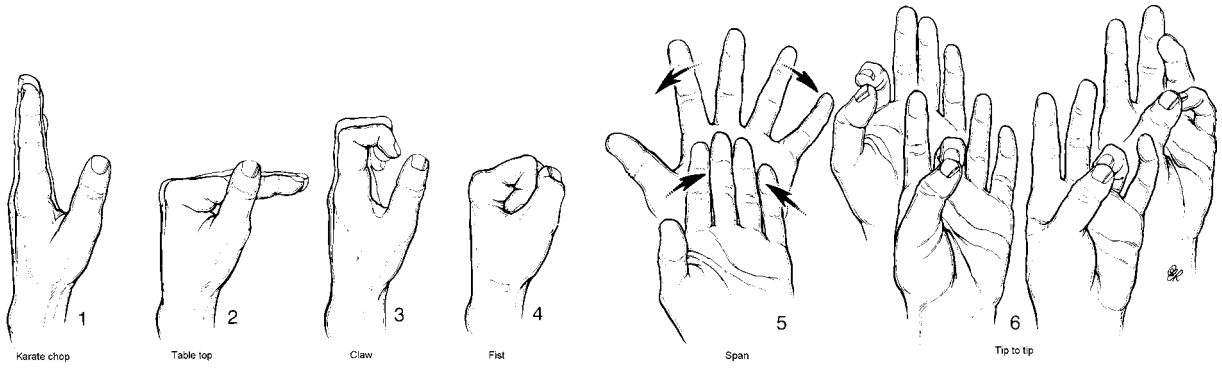






Your wrist and forearm have been placed in a dressing that includes a Scotch-cast splint, similar to fibreglass. This protects the repaired structures whilst leaving the hand free to be exercised.

Your hand will be elevated whilst in hospital to prevent swelling and stiffness of the fingers. Please remember not to walk with your hand dangling, or to sit with your hand held in your lap. It is fine, however, to lower your hand for light use and you should get back to normal light activities as soon as possible as guided by common sense. There are a number of exercises you should do to prevent stiffness.



Two weeks after the operation, your stitches will be removed and you will be given a lighter splint. There obviously will be some swelling and bruising. Look out for any redness or tenderness in the area around the wound that might indicate an infection. Do not apply antiseptic but please contact my secretary if you have any worries. It is quite safe to leave the wound open. At this stage it is safe to get the hand wet in a bath or shower. The wound and the surrounding skin often become very dry and will be more comfortable if a moisturizer is applied. An easy way of doing this is to briefly immerse your hand in some warm water to which some Johnson's baby oil has been added. Alternatively, apply an unscented moisturizing cream such as Diprobase to the skin.

You will be instructed on your exercise program. This is intended to prevent the tendon/nerve becoming stuck to surrounding structures whilst avoiding straining the repair.

Nerve only The splint can be left off after two weeks for normal light activities. It is worth wearing the splint if performing heavier tasks or if you feel that the area is likely to be knocked or strained. You should not return to heavy unprotected activities until four weeks after the operation

Tendon The repaired tendon is much weaker than normal and takes about 12 weeks to recover full strength. Tendon repairs can therefore snap if over-stressed. The splint will be worn continuously for four weeks except when bathing the wound area. Over the next four weeks it should be worn at night of if you feel that the area is likely to be knocked or strained. Beware stretching your repair such as when getting out of the bath or chair or when lifting. You will be advised about your return to driving and work.