

FACT SHEET

WHAT IS OSTEO ARTHRITIS?

Osteo Arthritis involves the wearing away of the cartilage where two bones meet to form a joint. As the cartilage thins, this leads to joint pain, stiffness, deformity and eventual weakness. Swelling, redness and bone spurs called osteophytes frequently accompany osteo arthritis.

HOW CAN HAND THERAPY HELP?

While there is no cure for arthritis, a hand therapist can help to reduce pain and improve daily functioning in several ways.

BRACES FOR THE THUMB

For painful arthritis at the base of thumb a hand therapist can fit rigid, semi-rigid or soft braces, including custom-made options to support the affected joint and alleviate pain. These can be worn to reduce pain during specific activities or at night to relieve aching joints.



Push Brace

EXERCISES

Hand therapists can also advise you on the most up to date exercises, aimed at preserving joint stability and strength, and slowing the progression of deformity of the affected thumb.

ARTHRITIS GLOVES OR FINGER SLEEVES

Arthritis gloves provide light compression to reduce pain and swelling. These can be worn overnight or during activities. Individual fingerstalls can be custom-made from neoprene to protect a particularly painful finger against jarring during hand use.



IMAK Glove

JOINT PROTECTION AND ACTIVITY MODIFICATION

Hand therapists also provide advice on how best to protect arthritic joints during daily tasks.

THERAPEUTIC MODALITIES

Pain reducing treatments are also available including wax bath, ultrasound and inter x neurostimulation.