



Hand Therapy

Hand Osteoarthritis and Adaptive Devices

Joint Protection Application

These principles can be applied to help preserve hand function by protecting the joints.

Principle	Example
Spread the load and use stronger joints	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use two hands to carry objects • Carry a shopping bag on your elbow or shoulder rather than using your hands
Avoid tight grips and gripping for long periods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use padding/grips to enlarge handles of items • Use chopping boards with spikes to secure vegetables • Regularly stretch your hands during gripping tasks such as knitting or writing • Reduce the length of time you spend doing these activities
Use less effort	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Slide objects along a surface instead of lifting them • Use adaptive equipment to help make things easier
Avoid positions of deformity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use gripping aids for opening jars to direct the force through the hand rather than the fingers
Use joints in a stable position	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When carrying or gripping items, keep your wrist straight and your fingers in line with the wrist • Avoid lifting objects with your wrists bent downwards

Kitchen Equipment

It is beneficial to try different devices until you find the ones that suit you best.

Also think about how you can adapt activities to reduce the strain on the hands such as:

- Using light weight saucepans
- Using both hands to carry objects
- Smaller kettles can be utilised to reduce the weight or try filling up the kettle for just one mug.

Jar and Bottle Openers

- Useful for individuals with reduced grip or limited finger dexterity
- There is a large variety of these products that can be found to suit individual needs.



Dycem - Jar and Bottle Openers

- Dycem jar openers can fit different sized jars and incorporate a non-slip surface to help open jars.



Adapted Cutlery

- Cutlery items can be adapted by placing wraps around them or applying foam tubing to make gripping easier by increasing the surface area of the grip.
- Cutlery can also be purchased with increased grip sizes.



Adapted Kitchen Utensils

- The larger handles on these items help with weak grip.
- The angle of the adapted knife allows the wrist to be in a neutral position for chopping.



Kettle Tipper

- The movement of gripping and tipping a kettle can be difficult for both our fingers gripping and the movement of the wrist. Kettle tippers help to reduce the strain of lifting and tilting the kettle.



Two Handled Teapot

- Using both handles reduces the pressure of holding a teapot.



Two Handled Mugs

- Useful for individuals with weak grip or strength.



Spiked Chopping Board

- The spikes on the chopping board reduce gripping of items being chopped by placing vegetables or other items over the spikes to be held in place.



Household Aids

Osteoarthritis can affect your ability to carry out your normal daily activities. This section explores more general household aids which can provide you with some ideas of the variety of aids available.

Button and Zipper Hook

- Buttons require fine dexterity of the fingers which can be difficult with osteoarthritis. The hook enables buttons to be done up without this fine grip.



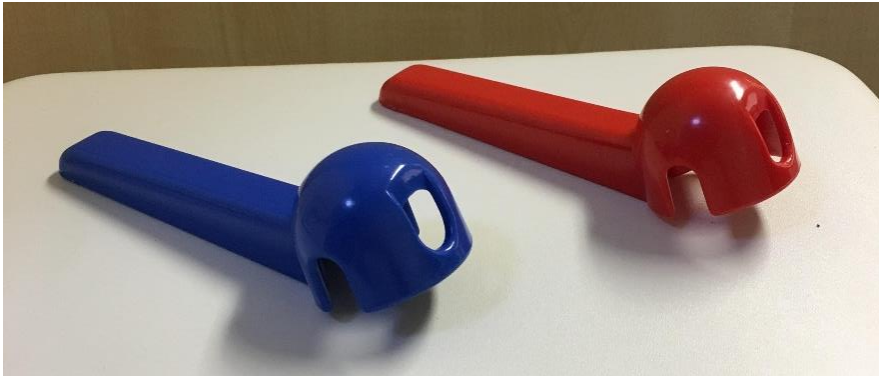
Key Turner

- Holding and turning a key can be difficult due to the fine grip and the rotation of the wrist. A key turner increases the grip area to help with this movement.



Tap Turner

- These are placed over taps to increase the surface area that is gripped to turn taps on and off.



Hobbies

Our hands allow us to carry out everyday tasks, but it is also important to be able to use our hands to do the things we enjoy. This section provides an idea of some equipment that can help with hobbies and leisure activities.

Pen Grippers

- Helps to make controlling the pen easier and reduce the strain on the hand when writing.



Gardening Equipment

- The altered handles on adapted gardening equipment can help to keep the hand and wrist in a neutral position to reduce strain on the joints. The larger handle also reduces the strain of gripping.



Self-Opening Scissors

- Altered scissors include larger grip for the hands as well as a spring to allow more ease of opening the scissors.



Contact Numbers:

We hope that you have found this information useful. If you have any questions or are worried about anything, please speak to the following Dorset County Hospital Staff:

Hand Therapy: 01305 255931

Useful Websites:

Arthritis Research UK:

<https://www.arthritisresearchuk.org/>

Versus Arthritis:

<https://www.versusarthritis.org/about-arthritis/>

About this leaflet:

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If you have feedback regarding the accuracy of the information contained in this leaflet, or if you would like a list of references used to develop this leaflet, please email pals@dchft.nhs.uk



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