

Contrast bathing

Therapy Department

Patient Information Leaflet

Introduction

After injury or surgery, you may notice some swelling in your hand. Swelling is a normal reaction of the body after an injury or trauma. Much of this is due to a build-up of fluid between the tissues which is called oedema. It may take several days for the swelling to reduce – this is normal.

A treatment called **contrast bathing** can be helpful in reducing swelling in your hand. It does this by alternating warm hand baths with cold hand baths which improves circulation. Reducing the swelling should also make it easier to move your hand.

Contrast bathing should only be carried out when advised by your therapist, when wounds are completely healed and when stitches have been removed.

What do I have to do?

You will need two clean containers, large enough to fit your whole hand and wrist inside.

- Fill one container with warm water
- Fill the other with cold water

Step one

- First place your hand in the bowl of **warm water**
- Squeeze your hand tightly into a fist and then fully straighten your fingers
- Repeat this and continue for **three minutes**

Step two

- Next place your hand in the bowl of **cold water**
- Squeeze your hand tightly into a fist and then fully straighten your fingers
- Repeat this and continue for **three minutes**

Repeat steps one and two up to six times.

Always end the session with your hand in the bowl of **cold water**.

It is recommended that you do contrast bathing ----- times a day.

If you have any questions, or if there is anything you do not understand about this leaflet, please contact:

Occupational therapist, Hand Therapy Team on 01384 456111 ext. 2430 (9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday)

Russells Hall Hospital switchboard number: 01384 456111

This leaflet can be downloaded or printed from:

<http://dudleygroup.nhs.uk/services-and-wards/occupational-therapy/>

If you have any feedback on this patient information leaflet, please email dgft.patient.information@nhs.net

This leaflet can be made available in large print, audio version and in other languages, please call 0800 073 0510.

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此宣传单可提供大字版本、音频版本和其它语言版本，请拨打电话：0800 073 0510。

Ulotka dostępna jest również w dużym druku, wersji audio lub w innym języku. W tym celu zadzwoń pod numer 0800 073 0510.

ਇਹ ਪਰਚਾ ਵੱਡੇ ਅੱਖਰਾਂ, ਬੋਲ ਕੇ ਰੀਕਾਰਡ ਕੀਤਾ ਹੋਇਆ ਅਤੇ ਦੂਸਰੀਆਂ ਭਾਸ਼ਾਵਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਵੀ ਪ੍ਰਾਪਤ ਹੋ ਸਕਦਾ ਹੈ, 0800 073 0510 ਤੇ ਫੋਨ ਕਰੋ ਜੀ।

Aceasta broșura poate fi pusă la dispoziție tipărită cu caractere mari, versiune audio sau în alte limbi, pentru acest lucru va rugăm sunați la 0800 073 0510.

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