

## Education

### Finger Dislocation

What is a finger dislocation?

A finger dislocation is a displacement of the bones of the finger from their normal position.

How does it occur?

A dislocation usually occurs when there is an accident such as a ball striking the tip of the finger or a hard fall onto a finger or getting a finger caught on a piece of equipment like a football mask or a basketball net.

What are the symptoms?

A dislocation causes immediate pain and swelling. The finger looks swollen and crooked. Usually you are unable to bend or straighten the dislocated joint.

How is it diagnosed?

Your health care provider will examine your finger. An x-ray will be taken to confirm the dislocation and to determine if there is also a break in your finger.

How is it treated?

Your health care provider will realign the dislocated bones. Your finger will be placed in a protective splint for several weeks.

Your finger will most likely be swollen after the dislocation. You should apply ice packs to your finger for 20 to 30 minutes every 3 to 4 hours for 2 or 3 days or until the pain goes away. Your hand should be elevated on a pillow while you are lying down or on the back of a chair or couch when you are sitting. Your health care provider may prescribe an anti-inflammatory medicine. You will be given exercises to strengthen your finger during the healing process.

How long do the effects last?

Your finger may remain swollen and have decreased range of motion and strength for many weeks and in some cases may be permanent. It is important to continue your rehabilitation exercises.

How long will it last?

Your finger may remain swollen with decreased flexibility and strength for many weeks. Sometimes the joint swelling may take weeks or months to go away, and in some cases may be permanent. It is important to continue doing finger exercises during and even after you return to your normal activities. These exercises help strengthen your finger and improve range of motion.

When can I return to my normal activities?

Everyone recovers from an injury at a different rate. Return to your activities will be determined by how soon your finger recovers, not by how many days or weeks it has been since your injury has occurred. The goal of rehabilitation is to return you to your normal activities as soon as is safely possible. If you return too soon you may worsen your injury.

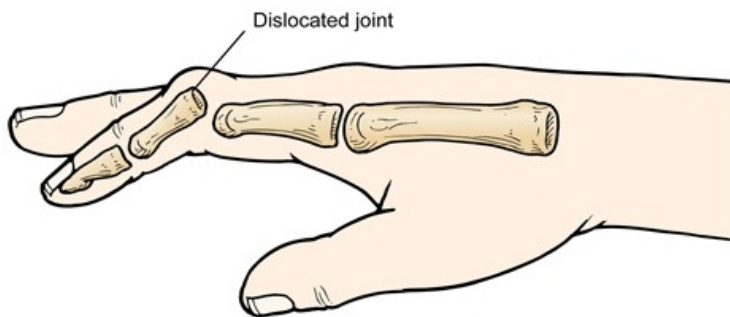
Your health care provider will recommend that your dislocated finger be splinted or "buddy taped" (taped to the finger next to it) for 3 to 6 weeks after your injury. In many cases, you will be able to return to your normal activities as long as you are wearing your splint or have your finger taped.

How can I prevent finger dislocation?

Finger dislocations are usually the result of accidents that are not preventable. However, whenever possible you should try to avoid getting your finger stuck in objects such as helmets, nets, or athletic jerseys.

*and is subject to change as new health information becomes available. The information is intended to inform and educate and is not a replacement for medical evaluation, advice, diagnosis or treatment by a healthcare professional.*

## Dislocated Finger



Copyright © 2006 McKesson Corporation and/or one of its subsidiaries. All rights reserved.