

Professor M. A. Imam
MD, D.SportMed, PhD, FRCS (Tr and Orth)
Subspecialist in Upper limb and Complex trauma reconstruction
Tel: 020 3384 5588
info@thearmdoc.co.uk
www.thearmdoc.co.uk

Thumb Carpometacarpal Joint (CMCJ) Replacement Hand Therapy Department

The Surgery

The trapezium bone sits at the bottom of the thumb to form the 'first CMC joint'. This bone is very prone to wear and tear which can cause pain and limit hand function. There are different surgeries to address this problem each with a different post-operative rehabilitation plan.

The surgery that you have had involves removing the first arthritic joint at the bottom of your thumb and replacing it with an artificial joint also called an implant / prosthesis. Thumb CMCJ prosthetic replacement aims to restore thumb biomechanics and improve pain and function. There are various types of implants that can be used based on your condition and surgeon's preference.



MAIA implant



Touch implant

Post-Operative care

Immediately Following Surgery

- You will be in a bulky dressing made more rigid with plaster
- This will remain in situ for 2 weeks

Two Weeks Following Surgery

You will be seen in Hand Therapy for:

- Fabrication of a thermoplastic splint which will support your thumb and wrist in a comfortable and appropriate position. You will be advised on constant use of the splint, removing only for exercises.
- The range of movement of your joints particularly your thumb and wrist will be assessed, and you will be advised a home exercise programme comprising of (but, not exclusive to) the following gentle active exercises:
 - Wrist flexion / extension
 - Thumb IP joint flexion / extension
 - Thumb opposition
 - Thumb circumduction
- You will be advised on scar management once the wound is fully healed.

Three Weeks Following Surgery

You will attend hand therapy for:

- Scar management as appropriate
- Review home exercise programme
- Review splint - continue constant use
- Fine motor activity

Four Weeks Following Surgery

You will attend hand therapy for:

- Continued scar management and advice
- Review splint - continue constant use
- You may commence gentle wrist strengthening as advised by your therapist

Although, at this point in time you may feel that the hand has recovered well from surgery, it remains important to proceed with caution and as advised by your therapist so that you don't put the prosthesis at risk.

Six Weeks Following Surgery

You will attend hand therapy for:

- Advice on removing the splint during the day- you will need to continue with night and protective use
- Advice on using the hand for light activities, e.g. toothbrush, cutlery, light cup of tea
- Assessment of gross grip strength
- Assessment of pinch strength
- Progression of home exercises to include graded hand and thumb strengthening
- Continued scar management and advice

Six to Twelve Weeks Following Surgery

Hand therapy input will continue if there is a specific clinical need and hand therapy programme progressed accordingly. You are likely to have a review with your surgeon to check on your progress.

Please note - these are just guidelines, and all patients are treated individually depending on their presentation on a case-by-case basis and as guided by the Consultant.

