Controlling Swelling In Your Hands

Please do the following activities and exercises to keep swelling in your hands to a minimum so you will have improved motion of your fingers.

In Bed Or When Sitting:
Whenever you sit or lie down, rest your hand and forearm on a stack of pillows.
- Keep your hand above the level of your heart.
- Do not let your hand drop or hand over the edge of the pillows.
- Keep your hand above the level of your heart except when using the hand for activities.

Standing:
Whenever you stand for long periods of time, raise your hand above your head and do fisting exercises.
- Close your fingers into a fist and then spread the fingers apart.
- Do fisting exercises 10 times every 15 minutes.

Wearing Special Gloves Or Dressing:
1. Isotoner gloves may be provided by your therapist
   - Wear the glove inside out.
   - Wear the glove 24 hours a day.
   - Remove the glove for washing your hands.
   - Hand wash the glove in cold water and mild detergent every other day, and hang to dry.
   - Stop wearing the glove and call your therapist if:
     - Your fingers feel cold or tingling
     - Pressure to fingertips does not turn the skin white
2. Coban wrap may be provided by your therapist. You will be instructed on how to apply the wrap to your hand.
Massage: Massage hand _____ times a day.

- Position your hand on pillows or hold your hand in the air with the elbow resting on a table.
- Apply lotion to the hand.
- Begin at your finger tips and use firm pressure with long, smooth strokes and rub down your fingers to the hand and wrist.
- Place your hand and forearm on pillows after massage.

Exercises: Do fisting exercises _____ times a day.

1. Fisting exercises:
   - Close your fingers into a fist, and then spread your fingers apart.
   - Keep your hand above the level of your heart.

2. Squeeze a foam gripper or Nerf® ball.
   - See exercise sheets provided by therapist:
     - Thera-Putty Exercises
     - Six Pack Active Hand Exercises
     - Tendon-Gliding Exercises

If you would like more written information, please call the Center for Health Information at (614)293-3707. You can also make the request by e-mail: health-info@osu.edu.

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- Upon request all patient education handouts are available in other formats for people with special hearing, vision and language needs, call (614) 293-3191.