

FULL CIRCLE HAND THERAPY

YOU'RE IN GOOD HANDS



BOUTONNIERE DEFORMITY

A boutonniere deformity is an injury to the middle joint of the finger (known as the PIP joint), which results in the inability to straighten that joint. The end joint of the finger, known as the DIP joint, then hyperextends, and is difficult to bend. This posture is the result of an injury to the extensor tendon over the top of the finger, which is known as the central slip.

CAUSES

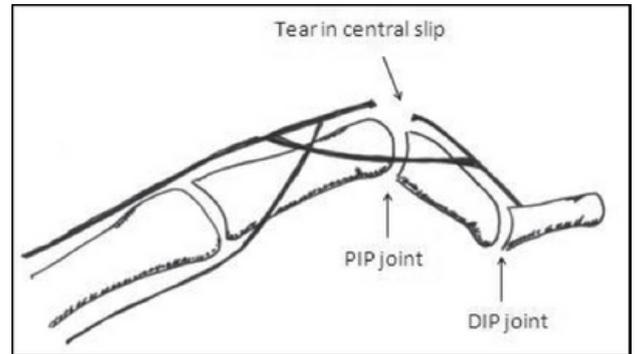
A tear in the central slip can occur from a dislocation of the PIP joint, a cut to the extensor tendon or from an inflammatory disease, such as arthritis. Unfortunately, what may appear to be simply a "jammed finger" may actually be a tendon injury and can result in a boutonniere deformity. If left untreated, these injuries can result in permanent stiffness to the injured joint. People with a boutonniere deformity will be unable to straighten their finger and will have difficulties with everyday activities, such as writing, buttoning their clothes and putting their hand in a pocket.

SYMPTOMS

In an injury that has just happened, it will be difficult to straighten the PIP joint; however, this joint may be straightened with help from the other hand. There will also be swelling and discomfort. In a boutonniere that has gone untreated, the finger may become stiff, making it difficult to straighten the finger at all.

TREATMENT

The treatment for a boutonniere deformity begins with an accurate diagnosis by a doctor or therapist. For a recent injury that does not require surgery, the treatment will involve a referral to a hand therapist for splinting. Boutonniere deformities that are a result of an untreated injury, arthritis or a laceration to the central slip of the extensor tendon, may require surgery.



HOW CAN WE HELP?

For a boutonniere deformity that does not require surgery, we will make a custom orthosis to place the finger in a proper position for correct healing and manage swelling. The person must use the orthosis as instructed in order to achieve a good outcome. For injuries requiring surgery, an orthosis will be made and a specialised exercise program will be commenced. We will also help you with wound care, scar management and return to normal function.