

# FULL CIRCLE HAND THERAPY

YOU'RE IN GOOD HANDS



## VOLAR PLATE INJURY

The volar plate is a ligament on the palm side of the finger made of tough tissue connecting the finger bones together for stability. The most common joint of the finger to have a volar plate injury is the one closest to the knuckle called the proximal interphalangeal joint, or PIP. The volar plate tightens as the PIP joint is straightened and keeps the joint from being bent backward or hyperextended. The volar plate can be sprained, ruptured or avulsed. A sprain occurs when the ligament is stretched or some fibres are torn. A rupture is when the ligament is completely torn. An avulsion is when the ligament is torn away from the bone causing a fracture.

## CAUSES

The most common causes of volar plate injuries are sports or falls when the finger is bent back forcefully. The volar plate can also be injured if the PIP joint is dislocated.

## SYMPTOMS

Initially, the finger may be painful, swollen and bruised around the PIP joint. Finger motion may be decreased due to pain and swelling. If the PIP joint has been dislocated, it may look out of place.

## TREATMENT

Most volar plate injuries can be treated without surgery. A physical examination and X-rays may be taken. Treatment may consist of a short period of protection by wearing an orthosis and early exercise. If the volar plate injury is not stable, surgery might be required.

## HOW CAN WE HELP?

We will assess your finger, and determine the appropriate therapy which may involve a custom made orthosis to protect the finger, oedema management and exercises to prevent stiffness, improve strength and function of the hand. This will assist in minimising long term deformity of the finger and allow return to full function.

