

When our fingers are working normally, they provide us with enough strength and dexterity to complete all kinds of everyday tasks—many of which we don't even think about. This includes everything from holding or grabbing small objects to gardening, cooking, typing, gripping the car steering wheel, and even climbing. Naturally, it can be frustrating when one or several fingers hurt, become stiff and stop functioning, or are affected by an injured hand. Thankfully, there are simple physical therapy finger exercises to get you back to doing what you enjoy most.

While finger surgery may be the eventual recommendation, orthopedic surgeons like ours here at Fort Worth Hand Center may recommend physical therapy finger exercises to see if a conservative approach makes sense first.

Are You Experiencing Any of These Finger Symptoms?

- Pain in one or several fingers
- Stiffness and limited finger movement
- Dull and achy feeling
- Swelling
- Numbness or tingling
- Cramping, popping, or a “catching” sensation
- Locking fingers
- Decreased grip strength
- Dislocation, finger fractures, or break
- Arthritis
- Impingements

Hand and finger exercises can help strengthen your hands and fingers, increase your range of motion, and may even give you pain relief.

Have questions about your recent injured hand, wrist or fingers?

Call 817-877-3277 to visit Fort Worth Hand Center's expert physicians.

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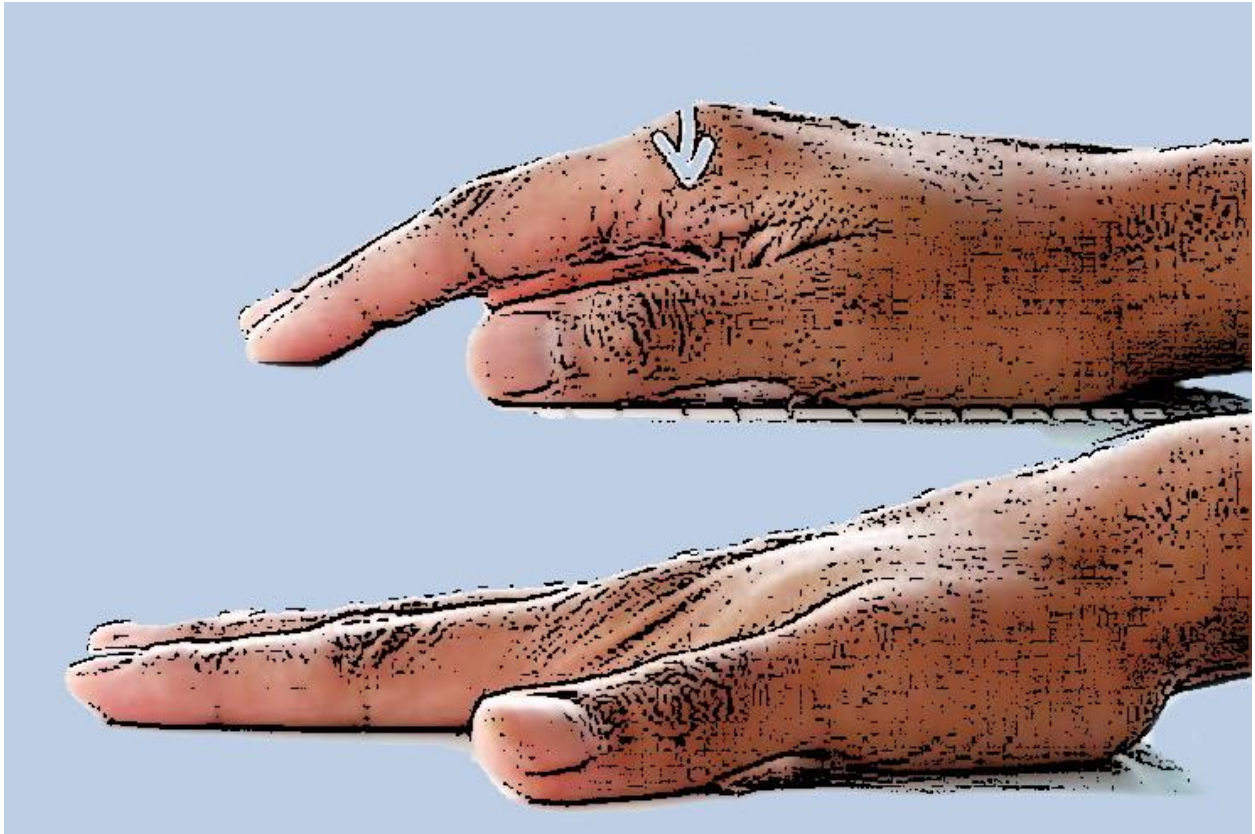
What Is Physical Therapy?

Musculoskeletal pain is the No. 1 reason people visit their doctors each year. Because we use our fingers for everything, there are so many ways we can put them at risk. In some cases, finger pain isn't serious and will go away on its own. But there are times when there has been a specific hand or finger injury that can cause a bruise, fracture, and even muscle or tissue damage. The point of physical therapy finger exercises is to restore hand and finger function. It's that simple. Physical therapy or physiotherapy has been around since the early 1800s and can be customized to meet your unique needs. Perhaps repeated typing or working with small objects has left you with arthritis and degenerative weakness in your fingers. Or you jammed your finger in a contact sport like football. Physical therapy finger exercises increase mobility, improve strength, promote proper alignment, and restore function. What your physical therapy entails really depends on the type of issue you're experiencing.

Your doctor will want to know your medical history, including any past injuries to the affected area and symptoms. From the doctor's prescription, a physical therapist creates an exercise plan to fit your specific needs.

Common Physical Therapy Finger Exercises to Aide Your Recovery

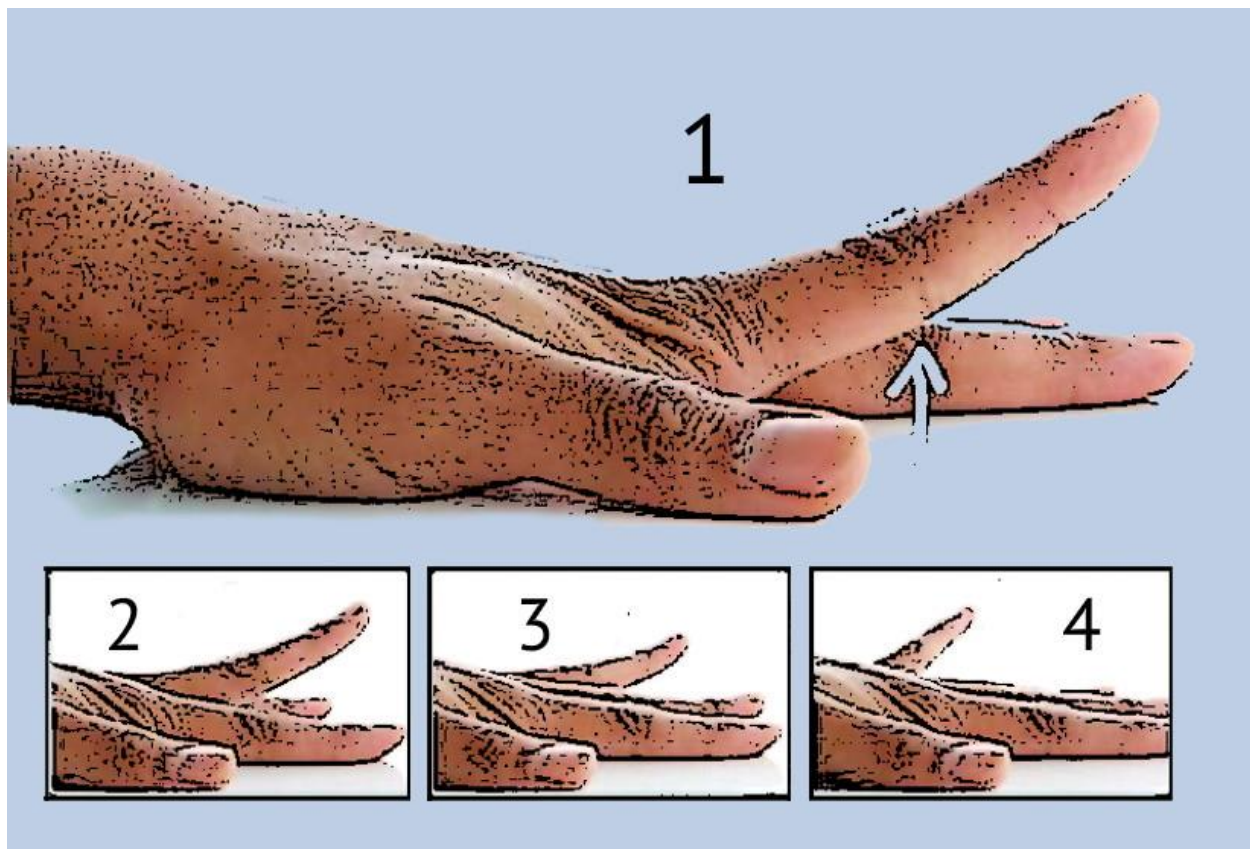
1. Finger Stretch



To improve range of motion, flexibility, and decrease pain in the fingers.

- Place your hand flat with palm down on a flat surface (ex: a table).
- Slowly straighten your fingers as flat as you can without forcing anything.
- Hold this position for 30-60 seconds and repeat four times with each hand.

2. Finger Lift



Another exercise to increase flexibility.

- Place your hand flat with palm down on a table.
- Slowly lift and lower one finger at a time off of the table.
- Repeat 8-10 times on each hand.

3. Thumb Stretch



This is an easy stretch to get your fingers involved in overall hand mobility.

- Hold your hand out with your fingers and thumb straight.
- Bend your thumb across your palm and use each finger to touch your thumb in succession.
- Repeat these rotations 20-30 times for each hand.

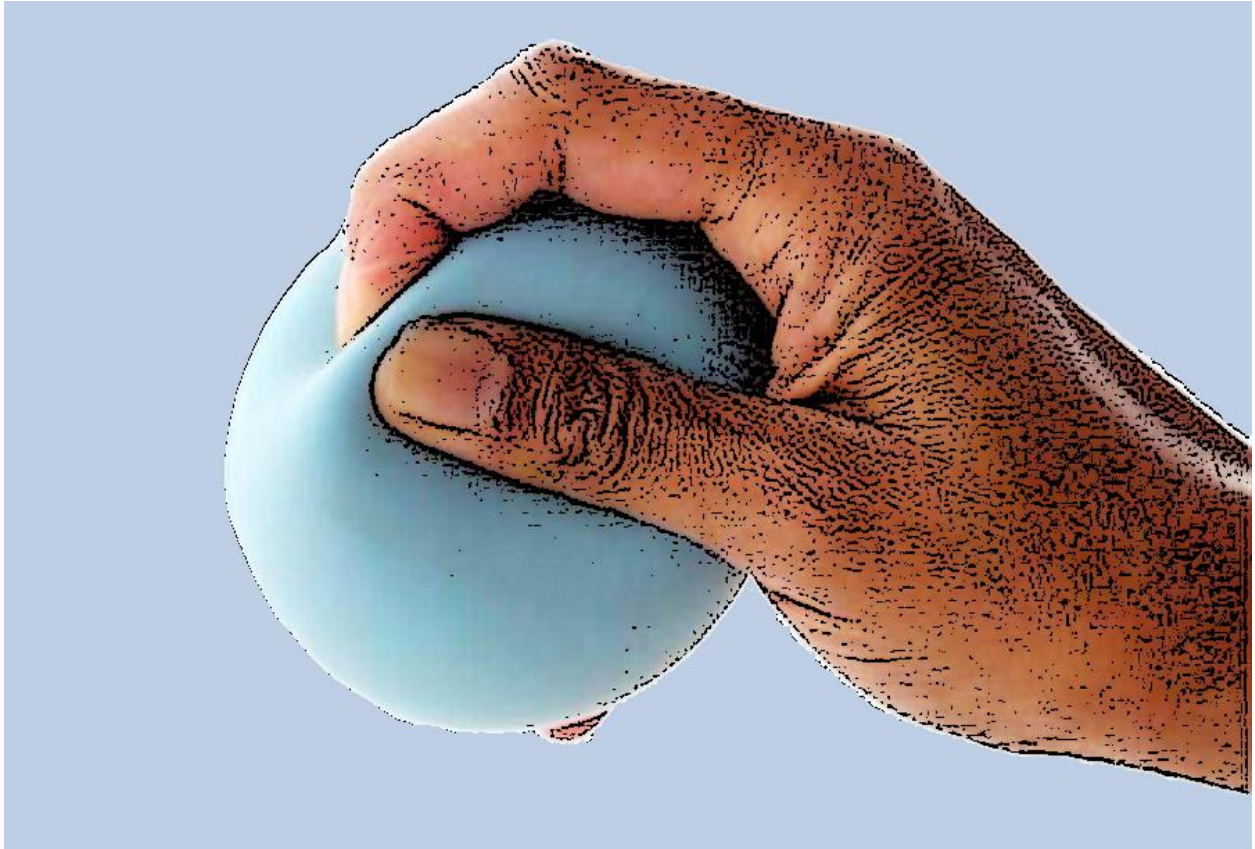
4. Claw Stretch



Another easy physical therapy exercise for the fingers to improve range of motion.

- Hold your hand out with your fingers and thumb straight.
- Bend your thumb across your palm and use each finger to touch your thumb in succession.
- Repeat these rotations 20-30 times for each hand.

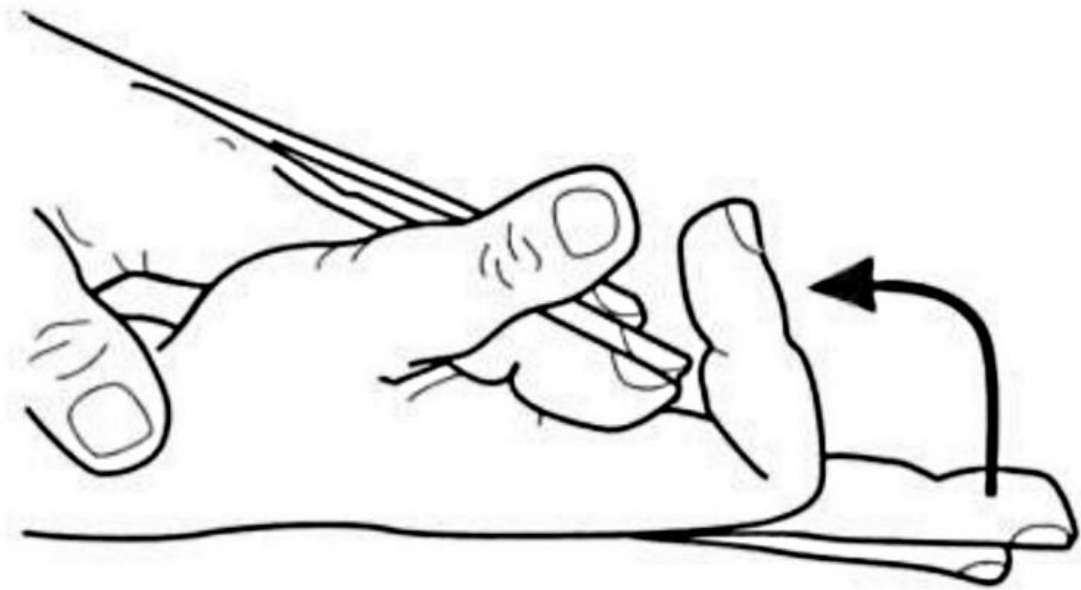
5. Foam Ball Pinch



This exercise is like the soft ball squeeze exercise and helps strengthen the muscles in your fingers and thumb.

- Hold and pinch a soft foam ball between the tips of your fingers and thumb.
- Hold for 30 seconds, then repeat 10-15 times with both hands.
- Do this exercise 2-3 times per week.

6. DIP Joint Blocking



Great for strengthening your finger joints.

- Support your hand with the palm up, using your other hand to support your finger just below the end joint.
- Bend and straighten the end joint (tip of the finger) while holding for 3-5 seconds.
- Repeat on opposite hand.

7. Towel Squeeze



A great physical therapy exercise for the fingers that improves grip strength.

- Place a towel roll on a table.
- With your palm facing down, gently grab the towel with your fingers and squeeze.
- Hold for six seconds, then release and repeat 8-12 times.