

Question ; I broke a bone in my hand three months ago it was immobilised for six weeks and is all healed however my hand, to my surprise, is still stiff and sore, as well as inflexible.

Answer:

This is quite a common reaction, although many people don't realise it. They think that once a break is healed, everything will go back to normal.

But the problem is that when you sustain a fracture, whether it be a crack or a complete break, the area needs to be immobilised so everything can heal.

That's obvious to most people. But the problem is that in the process, some joints around the injury can also become restricted— as is particularly the case with the hand, which has a lot of small joints.

The effect on surrounding joints can leave your hand, or other parts of the body, with on-going stiffness, restricted movement and other mobility issues.

To offset this effect, there are specific exercises you can do when the hand, or any other joint is immobilised.

But the real work needs to start once the healing is complete and confirmed.

This is where physiotherapy comes into its own. A professional therapist has the understanding of how to get the joints and tendons back on track in the shortest amount of time, and what exercises will work best to do just that.

They can also provide you with an effective home exercise program to back up the treatment. Whenever you injure yourself in this way, it is really important to follow up physio treatment to make sure everything else is in working order.

It may seem like its not important, but if you don't attend to the follow-up, you can easily end up ongoing restrictions and difficulties. x

Some exercises specifically for the hand are:

- 1) Squeeze a stress ball constantly. Start with the whole hand, then squeeze each finger.
- 2) Touch your thumb and tip of your index finger, then slide the thumb down the finger to the palm —repeat with each finger,
- 3) Put palms together in prayer position and slide the elbows apart still keeping the palms together.

Remember the old saying: 'If you don't use it, you'll lose it.'