

Reinstallation (continued)

3. While supporting the Pin Block, snap the Connector Assembly onto the Pivot (Fig. 7). There is a definite “click” when the device is properly connected.
4. Reattach the Hook and Loop Tab to forward edge of the Cuff directly over the large knuckle of the involved finger (Fig. 8).

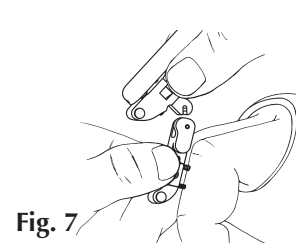


Fig. 7

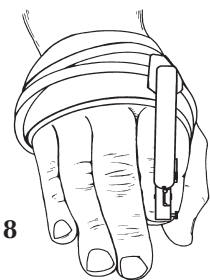
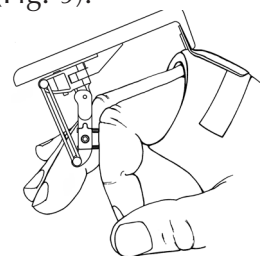


Fig. 8

5. Attach new Elastic Band(s) of the same color and quantity you removed (Fig. 9).

Fig. 9



6. If the Hook and Loop Tab is lifting the Cuff up away from the hand, the tab may be placed onto the Cuff first and the wrist strap wrapped on top of it (Fig. 10). Some cuff lifting is normal.

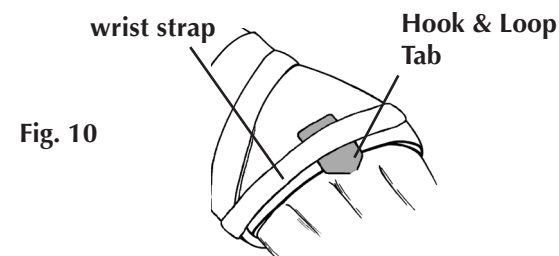


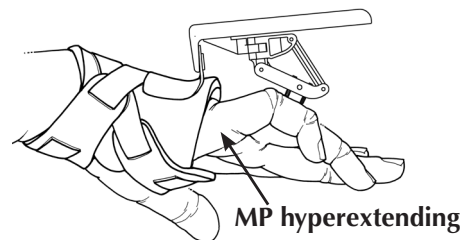
Fig. 10

Controlling MP Hyperextension

Some patients with PIP flexion contractures may also hyperextend at the knuckle (MP) joint. When the MP joint bends backward (Fig. 11), some of the extension force at the PIP joint is lost. To control MP hyperextension, an MP Flexion Strap is included. Use this strap only on the direction of your surgeon or hand therapist.

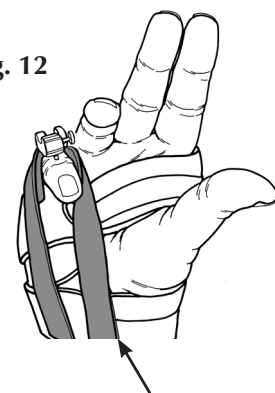
If directed to use the MP Flexion Strap, place the padded side over the top of the involved finger as shown (Figs. 12-13). Flex the finger at the MP joint while attaching the strap ends to the palm side of the Cuff, keeping the pad over the top of the finger. The straps and pad may be trimmed as needed.

Fig. 11



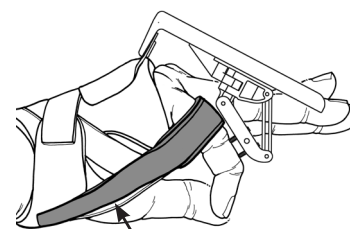
MP hyperextending

Fig. 12



MP Flexion Strap
Palm or front view

Fig. 13



MP Flexion Strap
Side view

Maintenance

1. Follow your surgeon’s advice to care for pin sites.
2. The Cuff may be washed using antibacterial hand or dish soap and cool water. Squeeze the suds through several times, then rinse thoroughly by squeezing through cool water until the water is clear of bubbles. Allow the Cuff to completely air-dry before wearing again.
3. The sliding action of the Connector Assembly may become compromised due to exposure to foreign substances during daily activity. If you experience problems with the mechanism not gliding smoothly, you may need to disconnect the Connector Assembly as described in the “Removal for Hand Washing and Bathing” instructions and wash it in warm soapy water. Rinse thoroughly, air dry, and reassemble the device. After washing, the Connector Assembly should slide freely on the rod. Do NOT apply oil to the rod inside the Connector Assembly.
4. If you develop a rash or skin irritation under the Cuff, a cotton stockinet may be worn under the Cuff.
5. You or your provider may request replacement Cuffs, Elastic Bands and other supplies by calling Hand Biomechanics Lab at 916-923-5073.

Digit Widget®

External Fixation System

Patient Information

This information card will help you to facilitate treatment with the Digit Widget.

WARNING: The Elastic Bands in this product contain natural rubber latex that may cause allergic reactions. Call Hand Biomechanics Lab at 916-923-5073 to request latex-free bands.



Hand Biomechanics Lab, Inc.
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Digit Widget® - Introduction

The Digit Widget uses the force of Elastic Bands to help straighten a stiff, bent finger. Your surgeon has chosen this method of treatment because the device can be worn up to 24 hours a day without putting pressure on the skin. Especially in the case of a severe contracture, the Digit Widget can be used as a “pre-op” splint to help the surgeon gain access to the palm side of the finger.

The Digit Widget “grows” the palmar soft tissues of a contracted PIP joint back to length by transmitting an extension torque to the joint via skeletal pins. When combined with a surgical plan to rebalance the forces across the joint toward normal, the odds of increasing the joint’s active range of motion are improved. This process takes some time as the soft tissues are being lengthened, not merely stretched.

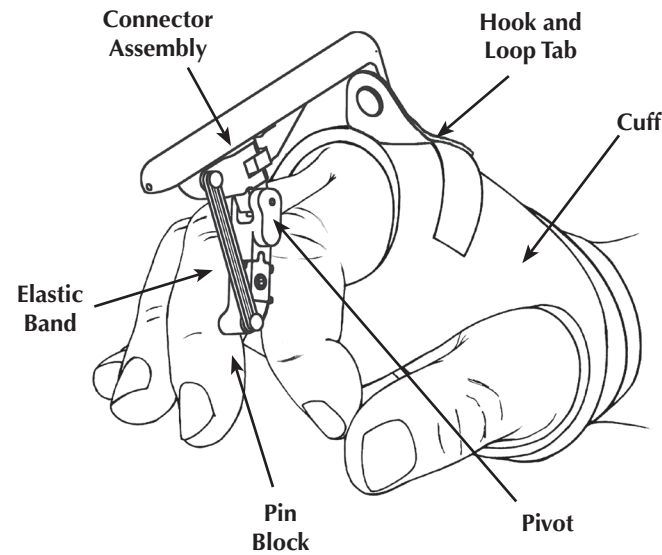
Installing and Changing Elastic Bands

Replace the Elastic Band(s) daily. A Band Applicator Tool is included in the kit, and a large paperclip can also be used to facilitate changing the bands. Your surgeon or therapist should help to determine the number and color of bands to use and the time worn each day. Contact your provider if pain and/or swelling occur.



Begin with the lightest weight band (purple) and monitor gains in extension; the goal is a gain of 10-20° per week. Progress to the medium (pink) band and then heavy (tan) band only if necessary. Reduce torque if you experience pain or swelling.

The reversal of a stiff, bent joint can take a significant amount of time. The goal is to apply enough force to encourage the finger tissues to gradually lengthen, allowing the finger to straighten. This force should not be so high as to cause undue discomfort, swelling or stiffness. Alert your surgeon or therapist if you are experiencing these symptoms.



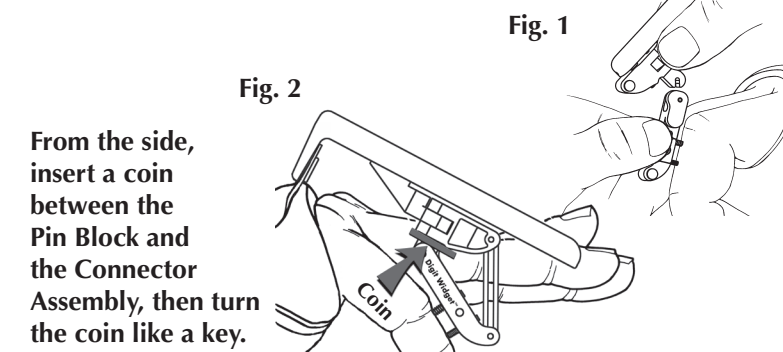
Removal for Hand Washing and Bathing

Consult your surgeon/therapist to see if it is appropriate for you to remove the device for hand washing and bathing.

1. Remove the Elastic Band(s). Note the quantity and color for replacement.
2. Lift the Hook and Loop Tab off the Cuff.
3. To remove the Connector Assembly, extend it toward your wrist, then rotate the wrist end up and over the top of the hand toward the fingertip until it snaps off the Pin Block. Do not pull on the device; it will unsnap from a rotational motion. Support the Pin Block to minimize the force felt at the bone pins (Fig. 1).
4. Remove the Cuff.

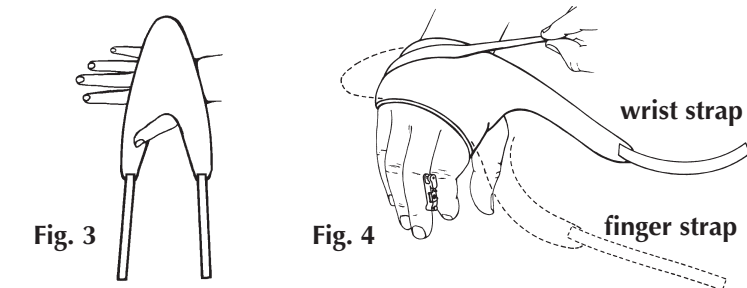
An alternative method using only one hand: Leaving the Hook and Loop Tab in place, insert a coin in the space between the Pin Block and Connector Assembly from the side as shown (Fig. 2). Turn the coin as you would rotate a key to force the two pieces apart. The coin technique will only work on the side of the Pin Block that has the printed words “Digit Widget.” Proceed with steps 2 and 4.

5. Wash hands using soap and water, rinse thoroughly and use a clean paper towel to dry around the pins.



Reinstallation

1. Lay the unwrapped Cuff on the hand as shown (Fig. 3) with the smoother side against the skin. Lay one strap above and one strap below your thumb. Wrap the finger strap down and across the palm and attach near the wrist. Position the Cuff’s forward edge parallel to the base of the fingers (Fig. 4).



2. Wrap the wrist strap up and across the palm and attach starting near the base of the small finger and continuing toward the space between thumb and finger (Fig. 5). Properly placed straps should form an X or V pattern when viewed from the back of the hand (Fig. 6). Snug the Cuff enough to prevent movement on the hand but not so tight as to cause discomfort or finger swelling.

