

Thumb Arthritis – CMC Joint Joint Protection (Base of Thumb) Patient Education

By properly positioning your thumb with daily activities, you can help quiet the pain and reduce the “wear and tear” to the base of your thumb. Outlined below are suggestions to help preserve the joint and reduce pain by avoiding or changing the way you perform certain activities.

How to Help Your Thumbs: “Favorable”

Outlined below are the preferred ways to position and use your thumb.



Pick up and/or manipulate small objects with your thumb and first two fingers.



Open jar lids with a rubber grip (non-skid) pad.



Slice open bags with scissors.



Use storage bags with “sliding” closures.



Use ergonomic hand tools, such as ergonomic gardening trowels.



Consider building up the handle on toothbrushes, pens, silverware, and hairbrushes for a wider grasp.

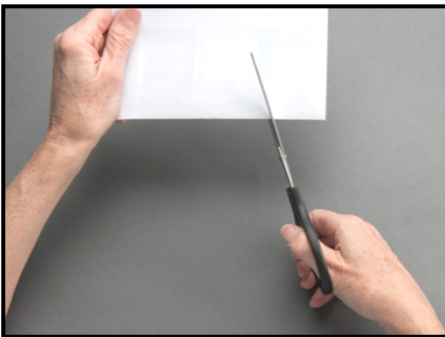
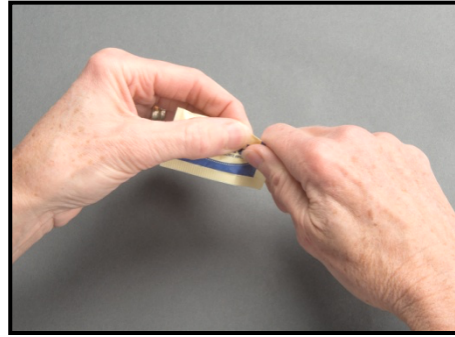
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Try to Avoid the Following: “Unfavorable”

Outlined below are movement patterns to **avoid**, which can aggravate the pain, causing further joint damage.



Pinching and pulling apart bags such as chips, sweetener packets, or frozen vegetables



Extensive use of scissors



Repetitive pinching and pulling,
such as pulling weeds



Pinching and twisting objects,
such as a bottle top



Performing exercises with the wrists
back and thumbs against the hand
&/or tasks such as cleaning the floor

Additional Information

- Custom-fabricated thumb splints and specific prefabricated splints can be very beneficial in decreasing pain and properly positioning your joints to reduce the wear and tear at the base of your thumb.
- The splints may be worn during the day and the night.
- Overall, the goal is to decrease the wear and tear to the base of your thumb. By wearing splints and modifying the way you approach handling objects with your thumb and fingers, you can reduce the pain and help preserve your joints.