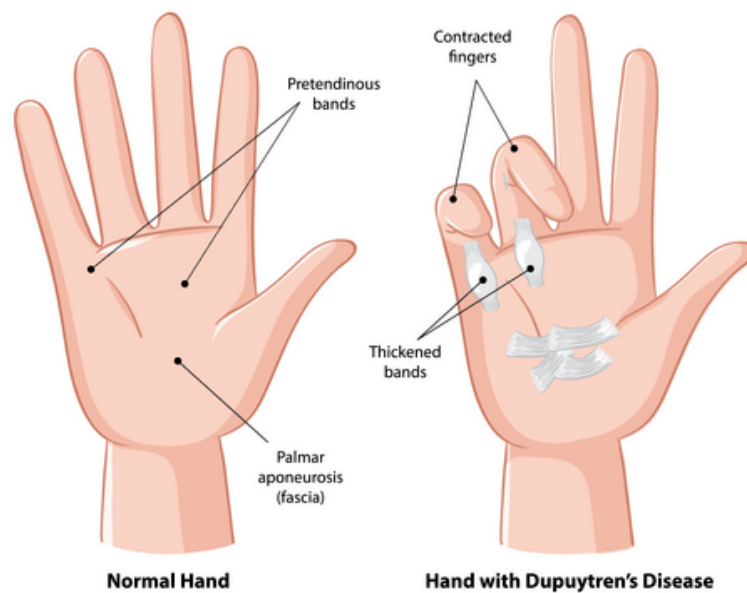


Dupuytren's Contracture

Dupuytren's Contracture

A thickening of the fascia in the palm of the hand, leading to curling of the fingers into a bent position.



What is Dupuytren's Contracture?

Dupuytren's contracture is a condition that affects the **palmar fascia**, the tissue under the skin of the palm.

It causes:

- **Thickening and tightening** of the tissue
- Formation of **cords** under the skin
- Fingers (usually **ring or little finger**) to **bend towards the palm**

- Difficulty **straightening the fingers**

It **does not usually affect sensation or cause pain**.

Causes

The exact cause is unknown, but risk factors include:

- Age (usually over 50)
 - Male sex
 - Family history (genetic tendency)
 - Northern European ancestry
 - Diabetes, smoking, or excessive alcohol intake
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Symptoms

- Thickened skin or nodules in the palm
 - Cords under the skin
 - Fingers gradually bending towards the palm
 - Difficulty performing tasks like **gripping, holding objects, or shaking hands**
 - Usually **slow progression** over years
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Diagnosis

- **Clinical examination** by your GP or hand specialist
 - Usually no tests needed
 - Measurement of finger contracture using the **tabletop test**
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Treatment

Treatment depends on severity and impact on daily life:

1. Observation

- Mild cases may **not require treatment**
- Regular monitoring for progression

2. Non-Surgical Treatment

- **Splints:** occasionally used, but limited effectiveness
- **Needle aponeurotomy:** minimally invasive procedure to release cords

3. Surgery

- Indicated for **significant finger contracture** affecting hand function
 - **Fasciectomy or fasciotomy:** removing or releasing the thickened tissue
 - **Post-surgery physiotherapy** helps restore movement and strength
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Self-Management Tips

- Gentle stretching of fingers and hand exercises
 - Avoid prolonged gripping of tools that strain the fingers
 - Keep hands and skin **soft with moisturizers**
 - Monitor for progression and seek advice if function is affected
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When to See Your Doctor

- Finger contracture **interferes with daily tasks**
 - Rapid progression of finger bending
 - Difficulty **gripping, writing, or performing self-care**
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Prognosis

- Condition usually **progresses slowly**
 - Surgery can **restore function**, but recurrence is possible
 - Early intervention improves outcomes
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References:

- NHS: [Dupuytren's contracture](#)
- British Society for Surgery of the Hand: *Dupuytren's guidelines*