

# Stress Loading Exercises

Research has shown that putting weight through the affected arm (stress loading) helps to reduce pain symptoms by overriding the pain messages being sent from your hand to the brain.

The following exercises aim to retrain the hand in appropriate reactions to stress and movement. Increased pain and swelling may be noticed initially, but as long as this subsides within 20-30 minutes you are working appropriately.

## Stress Loading Program

- Carry a briefcase, purse or carry bag in the affected hand.
- Keep your knuckles, wrist and arm straight.
- Carry the maximum weight you can tolerate.
- Begin with a weight of 0-2kg (eg: use a weight, fruit or water bottle in a bag).
- Carry the weight with you throughout the day whenever you are standing or walking.
- *Theraputty Exercises:* **Day 1 – 3:** 3 min sessions, 3 x daily  
**Day 3 – Week 2:** 5 min sessions, 3 x daily  
**Week 2 onwards:** 7 min sessions, 3 x daily or 10 min sessions, 2x daily

### 1. Lifting/Straightening Fingers

Using palm of hand, roll out putty into a coil shape. Keep fingers straight, lifting them away from the table.



### 2. Knuckle Dig

Form a fist. Push knuckles down into putty, keeping wrist straight



### 3. Finger Claw

Draw fingers through putty, keeping wrist and knuckles straight.



#### 4. Finger Dig

Hold putty in opposite hand. Pierce and remove each finger individually from the putty.



You should see improvement in 5 – 7 days. The amount of time required to be spent on this program ranges from 2 weeks to 8 months, with an average of 3 months.

**Please contact your therapist if you have any queries or concerns.**

**Therapist:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Phone: (07) 3646 7100**