

Thumb Trapeziectomy and Suture-Button Suspensionplasty



"Working with a knowledgeable hand therapist can make the difference between success and failure in complex hand surgical cases. The therapist extends the continuum of our care, as well as functioning as coach and trainer for our patients."

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Thumb Arthritis



Who is a candidate for a thumb trapeziectomy and suture-button suspensionplasty procedure?

- Patients with arthritis at the base of the thumb
- Patients who have not been able to decrease pain and symptoms on their own may benefit from this surgery
- Symptoms may include pain, swelling, decreased motion and weakness of the hand. It may be difficult and painful to complete everyday tasks such as opening jars, buttoning and turning doorknobs

What is done during this procedure?

During surgery, a small cut at the base of the thumb is made to remove the trapezium. Movement will be less painful with the arthritic bone removed. Next, the surgeon will secure the base of the first metacarpal (thumb bone) to the base of the second metacarpal (index finger bone). Removing the bone will not affect motion of the wrist or thumb after surgery.

What should I expect after surgery?

Your wrist and thumb are immobilized in a cast or orthosis after surgery. It is important to keep your hand above the heart to decrease swelling. It is also important to move your shoulder, elbow and fingers to prevent swelling and stiffness. The doctor will let you know when it is safe to begin moving the wrist and thumb. The doctor may refer you to a hand therapist after surgery to help you recover.

What can a hand therapist do for me?

- Help with post-op pain and swelling
- Make a custom orthosis/brace for protection
- Provide exercises to increase movement of the hand and wrist
- Teach you how to take care of your scar and recommend ways to limit the stress you put on your healing thumb when using the hand



Difficulty and pain with everyday tasks, including opening jars, is a symptom of arthritis at the base of the thumb, for which a patient may undergo a thumb trapeziectomy and suture-button suspensionplasty procedure