



AMERICAN SOCIETY OF
PLASTIC SURGEONS®

Informed Consent

Trigger Finger Surgery

**INSTRUCTIONS**

This document will tell you about trigger finger surgery. It will outline its risks, and other treatments.

It is important that you read the whole document carefully. Please initial each page. Doing so means that you have read the page. Signing the consent agreement means that you agree to the surgery that you have talked about with your plastic surgeon.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Tendons that flex your fingers pass through organs called “pulleys” in your palm and fingers. The flexor tendons glide through a covering sheath. Injuries to tendons or their sheaths can reduce normal tendon motion. This can cause a popping feeling as thick parts of the tendon pass back and forth through tight parts of the sheath. This may get worse until the finger locks in a flexed position. At that point, the only way to make it straight may be by pulling on it like the trigger on a gun. Pain, stiffness, and swelling may go along with this “trigger finger” problem.

Trigger finger has many causes. Surgery can help the tendon move more easily by making the tight pulley loose at the base of the finger. The decision to have this surgery depends on how bad the condition is.

OTHER TREATMENTS

Other ways to treat trigger finger are not having surgery, taking medicines, hand therapy, or injecting steroids into the tight pulley. These methods have their own risks and issues.

RISKS OF TRIGGER FINGER SURGERY

All surgeries have some risk. Every procedure has its limits. Choosing to have a surgery means comparing the risks and benefits. Most patients do not face problems, but you should talk about them with your plastic surgeon. Make sure you know all possible risks of trigger finger surgery.

Scarring:

All surgeries cause scarring. This surgery may leave long, prominent scars in the skin or deeper tissues. These may not go away. Scars may be ugly, dark, raised, red, and even itchy or painful. Some patients are prone to keloids. These are prominent, raised, red scars that stay that way. You may need more medications and/or surgery.

Infection:

Infection can occur after surgery. You may need to return to the hospital for treatment if you get an infection. You may have to take antibiotics. More surgery may be needed.

Hematoma:

Bleeding after surgery can form a hematoma. This is a local pool of blood outside the blood vessels. Normally this goes away on its own. If it does not there may be problems with healing. You may need to have a doctor drain the fluid.

Wound Opening:

The wounds made in surgery can break open, causing poor results. If this happens, you may need more surgery or other treatment.

Change in Skin Feeling:

You could have a loss or change of feeling in the skin of the finger, hand, or arm after surgery. This may not get better.



Damage to Nearby Tissues:

The surgery might damage nerves, blood vessels, bones, or other tissues. The risk of this depends on the type of surgery. You may need more surgery if this happens. Injury to nearby tissues may or may not get better.

Complex Regional Pain Syndrome (CRPS):

Complex regional pain syndrome (CRPS) is rare but can happen after the surgery. If you have pain, swelling, redness, changes in temperature, and a heightened sense of touch, this could be CRPS. It may get better on its own. If it does not, you might need further treatment.

Lack of Improvement:

If you have other problems of the hand or wrist, they will not get better with trigger finger surgery.

Tendon Scarring:

Surgery to treat trigger finger may cause scarring around the nearby tendons. This can happen in the tendon itself or in other tissues. This keeps you from fully using the tendon. More surgery may or may not free the tendon from scar tissue that limits motion. Tendon scarring may cause other areas, such as joints, to lose normal motion.

DISCLAIMER

Informed consent documents give you information about a surgery you are considering. These documents explain the risks of that surgery. They also discuss other treatment options, including not having surgery. However, informed consent documents can't cover everything. Your plastic surgeon may give you more or different information. This may be based on the facts of your case.

Informed consent documents are not meant to define or serve as the standard of medical care. Standards of medical care are determined based on the facts involved in an individual case. They may change with advances in science and technology. They can also change with the way doctors practice medicine.

It is important that you read the above information carefully and get all your questions answered before signing the consent agreement on the next page.

