

PATIENT INFORMATION

DESENSITISATION – HOME PROGRAMME

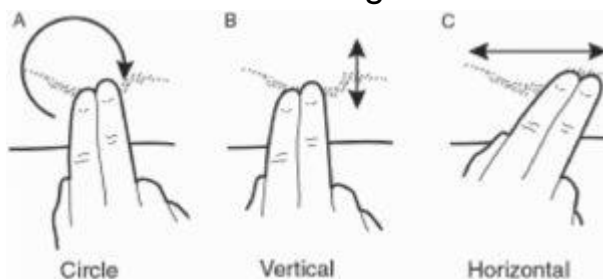


Introduction

Following an injury or operation, nerves within the skin can become overly sensitive. Stimulation to the skin such as touch or pressure can feel unpleasant or even painful. This leaflet provides you with information on how to improve these altered sensations.

Massage

- Massage the sensitive area for 5 minutes. Use your uninjured thumb or 2 fingers to gently massage the sensitive area. Consider starting away from the sensitive area and gradually move towards it. Massage in circular movements, maintaining constant contact and pressure with the skin.
- Gradually increase the pressure you apply as your skin becomes less sensitive.
- Gradually increase the length of time from 5 to 10 minutes.
- Vibration is effective in treating hypersensitivity, and you can try using the back of an electric toothbrush following the above method for massaging.



Texture Massage

- Find some different textures:
 - Examples of soft textures: cotton, cotton wool, silk
 - Examples of rougher textures: Velcro, towelling and sandpaper.

By stroking these materials near or over the sensitive area, work out the textures in order of which textures cause the least discomfort and which ones cause the most discomfort.

- Begin with one texture which causes the **LEAST** discomfort.
 - Gently rub the texture around the area moving towards the sensitive area-ensuring that the texture is in constant contact with the skin and the pressure used remains constant throughout.
- Continue at regular intervals until the area is no longer sensitive to that texture.
- **THEN** you can progress to the next texture which you identified caused you slightly more discomfort, and repeat as above.

It may take a few sessions before you feel able to move to the next texture.

Immersion Massage

- Fill a number of bowls with different particles of varying textures (smooth to rough) e.g. lentils, rice pasta, sand etc.
- Establish an order as before – least comfortable to the most comfortable. Place your sensitive hand into the bowl which causes the **LEAST** discomfort, and move your hand around in stirring motions changing the speed and direction. Build up time up to 10 minutes.
- When the particles become tolerable you can progress to your next bowl of least discomfort
- You can also put small objects such as buttons, keys into the bowl to pick out when able.
- You can bounce your hand gently up and down in the particles.

Function

It is important to use your hand in normal daily hand function as soon as you are able.

Following the above desensitising programme, carry out an activity such as washing the dishes, playing cards, writing or a work related task. Ensure that you know the task you are about to do is **ACHIEVABLE**. This will reinforce normal use of the injured area.

Remember

- It may take several sessions before you notice improvements.
- It is important to be consistent with this treatment. The more consistent you are the faster your symptoms will be relieved.

Please contact your therapist if you have any queries or concerns

Worcester- 01905 760683 | Alexandra- 01527 512146

NB: Please be aware this leaflet is to be used as a guide. If you find these exercises aggravate symptoms stop and seek advice from your therapist.

If your symptoms or condition worsens, or if you are concerned about anything, please call your GP, 111, or 999.

Patient Experience

We know that being admitted to hospital can be a difficult and unsettling time for you and your loved ones. If you have any questions or concerns, please do speak with a member of staff on the ward or in the relevant department who will do their best to answer your questions and reassure you.

Feedback

Feedback is really important and useful to us – it can tell us where we are working well and where improvements can be made. There are lots of ways you can share your experience with us including completing our Friends and Family Test – cards are available and can be posted on all wards, departments and clinics at our hospitals. We value your comments and feedback and thank you for taking the time to share this with us.

Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)

If you have any concerns or questions about your care, we advise you to talk with the nurse in charge or the department manager in the first instance as they are best placed to answer any questions or resolve concerns quickly. If the relevant member of staff is unable to help resolve your concern, you can contact the PALS Team. We offer informal help, advice or support about any aspect of hospital services & experiences.

Our PALS team will liaise with the various departments in our hospitals on your behalf, if you feel unable to do so, to resolve your problems and where appropriate refer to outside help.

If you are still unhappy you can contact the Complaints Department, who can investigate your concerns. You can make a complaint orally, electronically or in writing and we can advise and guide you through the complaints procedure.

How to contact PALS:

Telephone Patient Services: 0300 123 1732 or via email at: wah-tr.PALS@nhs.net

Opening times:

The PALS telephone lines are open Monday to Thursday from 8.30am to 4.30pm and Friday: 8.30am to 4.00pm. Please be aware that a voicemail service is in use at busy times, but messages will be returned as quickly as possible.

If you are unable to understand this leaflet, please communicate with a member of staff.