



Fingertip Injuries



Overview

Our fingers are often in harm's way, and our fingertips are prone to injury. A fingertip injury can involve skin, soft tissue, nerves and bone. It can involve the nail and the nailbed. These injuries can be serious, painful, and slow to heal. If you've injured your fingertip, you can take a few simple steps to minimize problems.

Injured, But Still Attached

If you've severely injured your fingertip but it's still attached, you should keep it clean and covered. If the skin is cut, try to help slow the bleeding with a clean wrap and some light pressure. Keep it raised, don't move it, and seek medical help.

Amputated

If your fingertip has been cut off, you need to preserve the amputated piece. A doctor may be able to reattach it. First, gently clean the amputated piece. You can use water, or you can use sterile saline solution. Protect it with a moist wrap. Put it in a watertight bag. Put that bag on ice. Don't let the fingertip have direct contact with the ice. This can damage the tissue. Get to a doctor as quickly as possible.

Treatment

Treatment options depend on how badly you've hurt your fingertip. You may need sutures or a splint. Your doctor may need to remove your nail, or make a hole in it to relieve pressure. You may need reconstructive surgery. You'll need to follow your doctor's instructions to make sure you avoid complications. Your healthcare provider can create a plan that's right for you.

