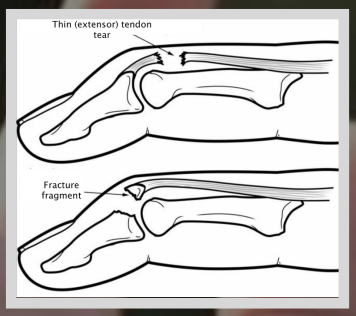
Mallet Finger Injury

Mallet finger is a common hand injury. It is caused by injury to the thin tendon that straightens the end joint of the finger. The most likely fingers involved are the middle, ring or little finger.

It is commonly caused by sudden forced bending of the fingertip, just like when a ball strikes the fingertip. The force of the blow may tear the tendon or pull the tendon away from the bone. It may sometimes pull along a small piece of bone. Occasionally, some minor force such as tucking in a bed sheet will lead to a mallet finger injury.

A mallet finger requires seeking an opinion from a qualified hand surgeon. Majority of time, mallet finger injuries can be treated without surgery. However, mallet finger injuries that are not treated properly may result in deformity, stiffness and inability to straighten the tip of the finger.



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Mr Andy SG Ang is an Upper Limb Orthopaedic Surgeon sub specialising in treating hand injuries.

For Non-Surgical Treatment:
We usually recommend treatment with a mallet splint. A mallet splint holds the fingertip straight until it heals. The splint must be worn full time for 6-8 weeks. If the fingertip droops during the 6-8 week period, the healing is disrupted and the splint needs to be worn for a longer period of time. After the initial splinting period, patients will gradually wean off wearing the splint.

For Surgical Treatment:
If splinting regimen is very difficult, our surgeon may decide to insert a temporary wire across the fingertip joint to hold it straight for 6-8 weeks. If there is a fracture fragment or the joint is out of line (subluxed), surgery may be required to fix the fracture and correct the joint subluxation. Occasionally, surgery may be required to correct the deformity or to treat the joint arthritis.

At **Apley Orthopaedics**, we will provide you with an expert opinion on the treatment options required to optimise the outcome for your mallet finger. Call our Melbourne Office (03)-70 234 234 or visit our website www.apley.com.au