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*Working hand in hand for a healthier you*

## Arthritis

Osteoarthritis is a condition where the cartilage covering the bone ends has worn away, resulting in potentially painful bone on bone contact. Joints can become painful to move, inflamed and swollen, tender to touch and difficult to use. Depending on the joints involved there are a number of ways to potentially manage or reduce the associated pain.

Conservative management options may include:

- Wear a splint when it has 'flared up', especially for thumb joints
- Using a cushioning band or small padded splint over finger joints during a 'flared up' episode
- Joint protection
- Avoid painful movements or tasks
- Use heat as a pain relief/ avoiding the cold
- Use daily living aids to reduce strain on the joint
- Gentle exercises

### Base of the thumb - Osteoarthritis of 1<sup>st</sup> CMCJ (Carpometacarpophalangeal Joint)

The thumb is used in almost all hand tasks. Therefore arthritis at the base of the thumb can be very painful and affect day to day activities. It is common, particularly in women over forty of years of age. Other risk factors may be previous injury, genetics and joint laxity. As the cartilage of the bones wears out, the bones come into contact with each other, causing pain. The two bones involved are the first metacarpal and the trapezium.

#### Splints for base of thumb osteoarthritis



Pre-fabricated, custom made (soft neoprene with rigid thermoplastic support), custom made thermoplastic.

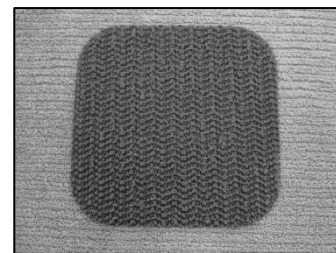
#### Useful aids



Jar opener



Fiskars scissors



Non-slip mat