



Dupuytren's Disease

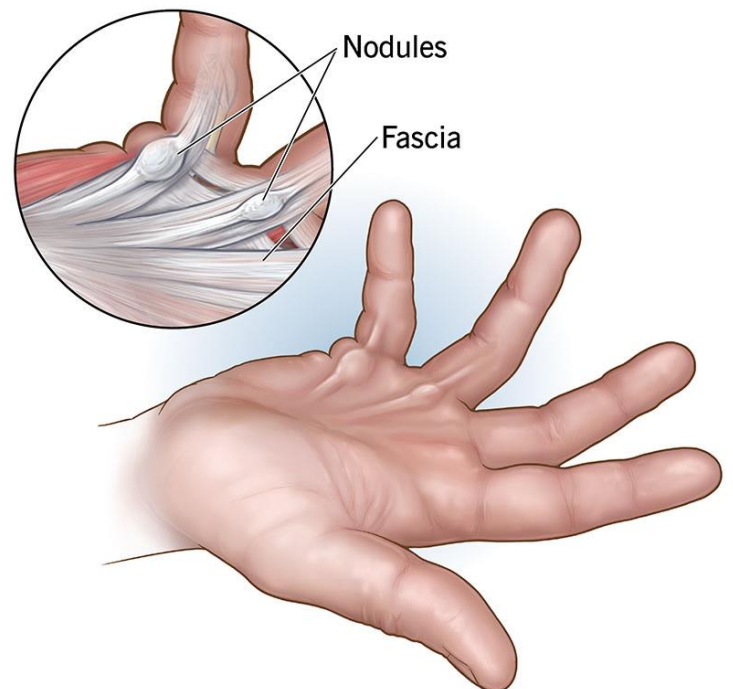
This handout is provided to you by Dr. Chen Tu and the team at Wakefield Orthopaedic Clinic. We are dedicated to offering you the highest standard of care and support as you navigate your treatment for Dupuytren's Disease.

Understanding Dupuytren's Disease

Dupuytren's Disease is a condition that affects the connective tissue in the palm of the hand, leading to the formation of thickened bands of tissue (cords) under the skin. This can cause one or more fingers to bend towards the palm, a condition known as contracture. It is most commonly seen in the ring and little fingers and can make it difficult to perform everyday tasks.

The condition is particularly prevalent among individuals of Northern European descent, affecting approximately 3% to 30% of the population, especially those over the age of 50. Men are more commonly affected than women, with a ratio of about 7 to 12 times.

Dupuytren's Disease can sometimes develop or recur after surgery or trauma to the hand, particularly if the fascia is disturbed or injured during the healing process. This can lead to the reformation of thickened tissue in the palm.



Symptoms of Dupuytren's Disease

- Thickening or shortening of the skin in the palm.
- Formation of one or more cords that may pull fingers toward the palm.
- Difficulty straightening the affected fingers.
- In advanced cases, noticeable lumps or nodules in the palm.

Treatment Options

Depending on the severity of the condition and the degree of contracture, Dr. Chen Tu may recommend one of the following treatment options:

- **Surgery:** Both procedures are performed as day surgery
- **Recovery:** Postoperative care includes hand therapy to regain strength and mobility. You will not use a splint initially to encourage early range of motion.
- **Night Splint:** A night splint will be made by hand therapists at 2 weeks. This is to be worn from 2 to 6 weeks post-operative, to hold the fingers straight overnight.



1. Fasciectomy (removal)

- **Description:** This surgical procedure involves the removal of the thickened tissue (fasciectomy) to release the contracture and allow the fingers to straighten. Local anaesthetic will be injected which may cause numbness for 6 to 36 hours.
- **Dissection:** Fasciectomy requires extensive dissection to carefully protect important structures such as tendons, nerves, and blood vessels during the procedure.
- **Sutures:** Dissolving sutures will be placed outside the skin, which need to be removed during a follow-up visit. If some sutures are missed, they will eventually dissolve and fall out.

2. Needle Fasciotomy (release)

- **Description:** This procedure involves using a needle to make incisions in the thickened tissue to relieve tension and allow the fingers to straighten. It is a less invasive option but does not remove the tissue.
- **Nodules:** It is important to note that while the contracture may be alleviated, the nodules in the palm will still remain after this procedure.
- **Reoccurrence:** whilst the main risk is reoccurrence, corticosteroids is injected to minimise the risk
- **Sutures:** No sutures are used in this procedure, making recovery simpler.

Postoperative Care

- **Pain Management:** Pain medication will be prescribed to help manage discomfort after surgery.
- **Wound Care:** Keep the surgical area clean and dry. Follow specific instructions for dressing changes and monitor for signs of infection.
- **Hand Therapy:** Hand therapy is typically recommended to help restore strength and range of motion after surgery.
- **Follow-Up Visits:** Regular follow-up appointments will be scheduled to monitor your recovery, remove sutures for fasciectomy, and address any concerns.

Risks and Complications

Both fasciectomy and fasciotomy are generally safe procedures, but potential risks include infection, bleeding, nerve injury, stiffness, and recurrence of contracture (particularly with fasciotomy). Dr. Chen Tu will discuss these risks with you in detail before your surgery.

Contact Information

- **Telephone:** +61 8 8236 4168
- **Email:** admintu@woc.com.au

Conclusion

Dupuytren's Disease can significantly impact hand function, but effective treatments are available. Whether you choose fasciectomy or fasciotomy, Dr. Chen Tu and the team at Wakefield Orthopaedic Clinic are here to support you throughout your treatment journey. Should you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact us.