

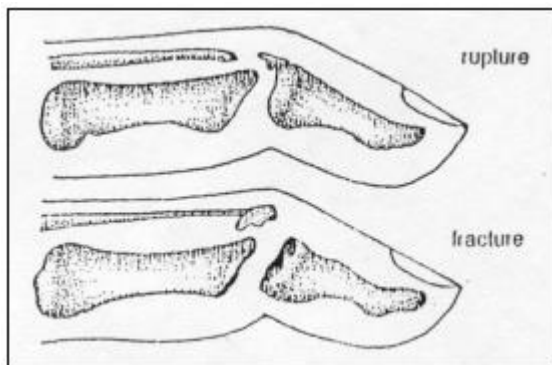
FINGERS NOT TO BE FORGOTTEN

STRAINS ON OUR FINGER JOINTS ARE OFTEN VERY POORLY MANAGED AND COMMONLY NOT TREATED AT ALL

This can lead to chronic pain, and a joint that remains swollen and painful for months after what seemed like a relatively minor injury.

Finger strains are most commonly sustained by an angulation force commonly experienced in sports such as basketball and netball. The ligaments are often torn. This leads to soft tissue thickening of the joint with the formation of inflexible scar tissue and painful adhesions.

The athlete will often present with a painful, swollen, bruised and stiff finger. Unfortunately many of these 'strains' are left not only untreated but incorrectly diagnosed. On x-ray a break in the bone is not uncommon or evidence of a recent dislocation may go unnoticed. Premature return to the playing arena without professional guidance can lead to re-injury.



Other injuries commonly seen are breaks or fractures of the bone at the base of the thumb usually due to a direct blow of the tip of the thumb. This is commonly experienced in boxers. Injuries like this left undiagnosed can lead to chronic pain and early onset arthritis.

OTHER INJURIES THAT CAN BE SUSTAINED ARE:

Cracks in the cartilage in the joint itself.

Cracks in the growth plate of fingers in the child, which can distort growth if left, undiagnosed and poorly managed.

Tendons over the fingers can also rupture. Tendons connect muscle to bone and can leave a deformed and non-functional finger. Early detection can mean prevention.

WHAT TO DO

1. Referral to the appropriate medical professional for accurate diagnosis.
2. Initial soft tissue management based on the R.I.C.E.R. principle.
3. Being aware of your H.A.R.M. factors.
4. Splinting/taping/bracing as appropriate.