



# MELBOURNE HAND THERAPY

- MHT Updates and Communications September 2020 -

## WHAT'S NEW THIS MONTH:

- Covid Online Work Related Strain
- Quality Improvement
- Taping
- Working from home
- Dorsal Block Thermoplastic Splint
- Exos Braces

## COVID ONLINE WORK RELATED STRAIN

### Kristen Pickles-Physiotherapist

The current global pandemic has seen more of us working from home, many having to make do with equipment and workstations that are less than ideal. This has led to new challenges and an increase in some injuries, particularly tennis elbow, carpal tunnel syndrome and De Quervains tenosynovitis.

These injuries often occur because of poor posture and patients sitting in awkward positions while typing. We can assess a patient's symptoms to determine what is causing their pain and devise a treatment plan to manage this. This often involves heat, soft tissue techniques, postural advice, activity modification and a home exercise program. We can provide custom made and thermoplastic splints if required. As well as being open for face to face appointments where appropriate, we also offer Telehealth appointments and can review the patient at home via video call. This has the advantage of being able to assess the patient in their own environment and provide advice and education specific to their needs.

## QUALITY IMPROVEMENT

### Jessica Goodale-Occupational Therapist

At Melbourne Hand Therapy, we are currently assessing how our therapists individually implement and document commonly used objective measures such as when assessing strength, range of motion and oedema. We are conducting in-house surveys to establish any differences in implementation and/or documentation, to ensure consistency and best practice between all therapists. Once survey results are finalised, the results will be discussed with staff and a review of any discrepancies to be reviewed and improved.



## TAPING

### Kate Rayner-Occupational Therapist

A number of our therapists attended the APFSSH/8APFSHT meeting in March as well as the later run AHTA webinar where Alison Taylor presented on taping techniques for pain management focusing on the superficial sensory system. It was very interesting to think about pain from a different perspective and an alternative way to approach treating patients

with pain. We love learning new skills to manage pain and being able to implement these skills into practice to our patient's benefit.

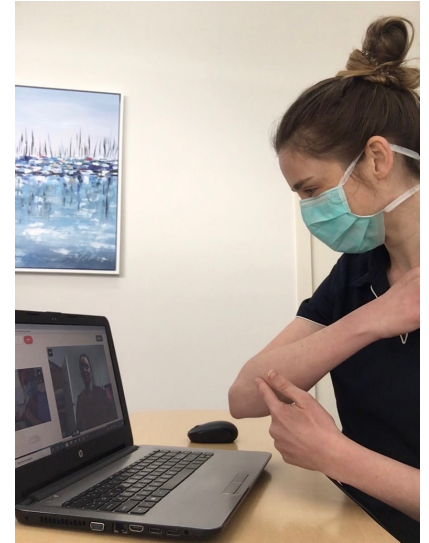




## WORKING FROM HOME

### Elaine Naughton-Occupational Therapist

In recent times we are seeing large numbers of patients experiencing repetitive strain injuries (RSI). A lot of these patients are now working from a 'home office' and are reporting symptoms of RSI. Providing Telehealth to patients has given us the opportunity to view a patient's environment/equipment and provide ergonomic intervention. This intervention can reduce recurrence of RSI while the patient engages in a graded exercise program with our therapists.



## DORSAL BLOCK THERMOPLASTIC SPLINT

### Colleen Moloney-Occupational Therapist

Injuries to the PIPJ are common following a fall or sporting incident. Off the shelf splints placed on in emergency departments or at the GP can be great for initial immobilisation and pain relief. However if worn for extended periods they can result in long term stiffness at both the DIP and PIP joints or even a fixed flexion deformity to the PIPJ. Stable dorsal dislocations and volar plate avulsion injuries of the PIP joint can be managed well with a dorsal block thermoplastic splint made by a hand therapist. The splint is low profile, it protects the joint from hyper-extension and lateral motion but most importantly allows for immediate safe active range of motion into flexion and reduces the risk of stiffness. The splint can be remoulded to a neutral position as the volar plate heals minimising the risk of development of a fixed flexion deformity. Dorsal block splinting assists in a healing of the volar plate, making the joint less prone to future dislocation or instability.



## EXOS BRACES

### Emmeline Fooks-Occupational Therapist

Exos braces provide an alternative to casting UL fractures and are waterproof as well as light and comfortable to wear. These braces work particularly well with patients who have oedema in their limb as the brace can be remoulded as oedema reduces. They are also an ideal option for a patient who enjoys swimming or is likely to get their limb wet. These braces are available from our Bellbird rooms.



## CONTACT US



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