

Elbow positions and hand exercises

Pinched nerve at the elbow (cubital tunnel)



How to use this sheet. Most of the treatment is how you hold the elbow: keeping it bent for a long time stretches and squeezes the nerve. Keep the elbow straighter, by day and at night. **Avoid:** holding the phone to your ear for long calls (use the speaker, earphones or the other hand), sleeping with the arm folded under the pillow or your head, and leaning on the inner elbow — on a desk, a window ledge or a two-wheeler handle. Do not let anyone, including a bone setter, massage or press hard on the inner elbow: the nerve lies just under the skin there. If the fingers are numb, take care with a hot tawa, hot vessels and knives, because numb skin does not feel a burn or a cut. Do the exercises gently; tingling that an exercise brings on should settle soon after you stop.

1 Keeping the elbow straight at night



At bedtime, wrap a small folded towel loosely round the affected elbow, with the thick part over the front of the elbow, so the elbow cannot fold while you sleep. Hold it with tape or a loose cloth band, never tight. If we gave you a night splint, wear that instead.



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sheet 17
old feel

Waking with less tingling in the fingers

Nallasopara West 87665 22099 · 12–2 pm, 7.30–9.30 pm

Virar East 92702 84859 · 5.30–7.30 pm

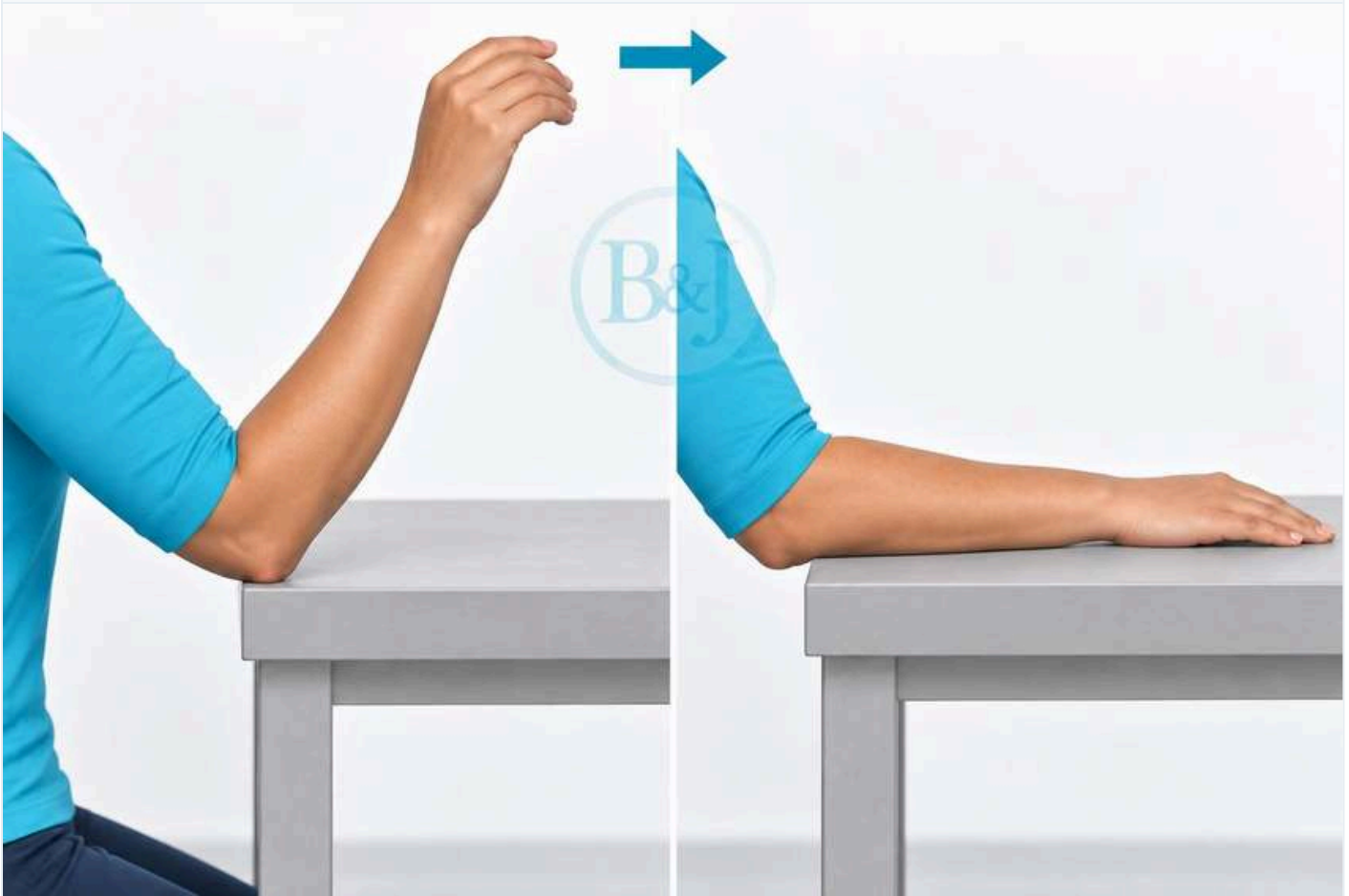
Monday to Saturday · Closed on Sunday. Urgent injury such as a fracture or dislocation? Please call first.

× Should not feel

The wrap pressing tight, or the hand swelling

2

Rest the forearm, not the elbow



At a table or desk, do not prop yourself on the bent elbow (first picture). Rest the whole forearm flat on the table with the elbow more open (second picture), so no weight sits on the inner elbow.

All day

Every day

✓ **Should feel**

No pressure on the inner elbow

✗ **Should not feel**

Tingling in the ring and little fingers



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3

Ulnar nerve glide



Start with the arm in front of you, palm up. Make an "OK" circle with the thumb and first finger, then bring the hand up so the circle sits over the eye like a mask, elbow pointing out. Go only until you feel a light pull, then return.

10 times

Once a day

✓ **Should feel**

A light pulling

✗ **Should not feel**

Lasting tingling



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4

Finger spread on the table



Rest the hand flat on a table. Slide the fingers apart as wide as they go, hold, then bring them back together.

Hold 5 seconds

10 times

✓ **Should feel**

The small muscles of the hand working

✗ **Should not feel**

Cramp or pain in the hand



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5

Card squeeze between the fingers



Rest the affected hand flat, palm down. Hold a playing card or a folded piece of paper between two straight fingers and squeeze it while the other hand pulls on it gently. Do this between each pair of fingers in turn.

Hold 5 seconds

10 times

✓ **Should feel**

The fingers gripping the card

✗ **Should not feel**

Cramp or pain in the hand



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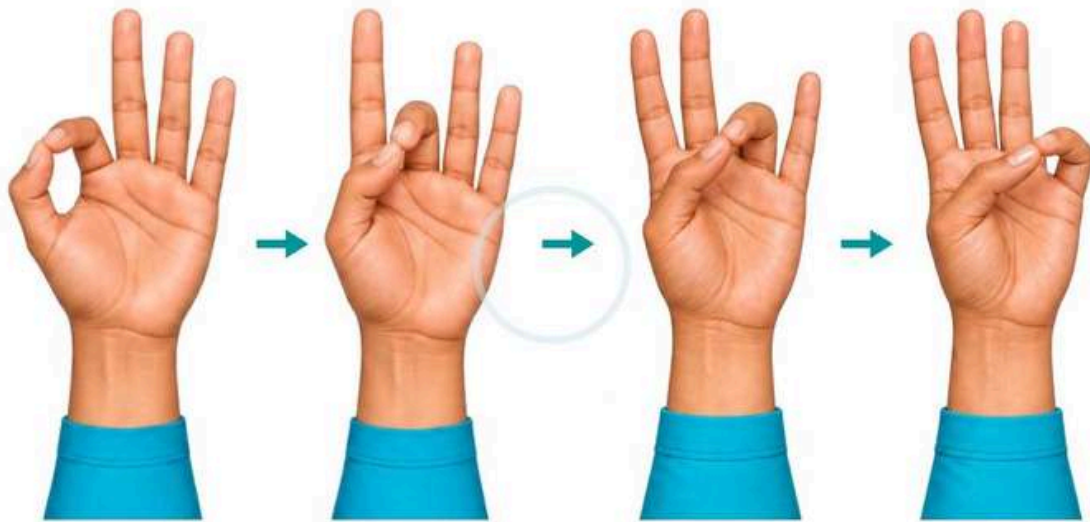
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Touch each fingertip to the thumb.

10 rounds

Daily

✓ **Should feel**
Control

✗ **Should not feel**
Pinching pain

Stop and telephone us if

- The hand is getting weaker or clumsier, you start dropping things, or the ring and little fingers begin to curl and will not straighten — come the same day
- The hand looks thinner, with a hollow between the thumb and index finger on the back of the hand
- The numbness spreads, or stays all the time instead of coming and going
- An exercise brings on tingling that does not settle soon after you stop



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