

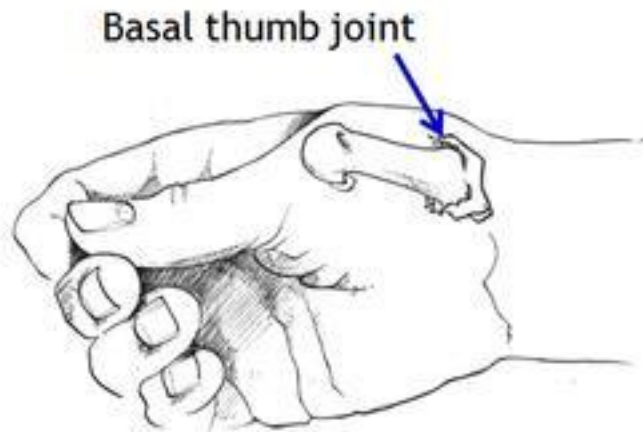
# Trapeziectomy

## Base of Thumb OA Surgery

To learn more about 'arthritis at the base of the thumb' please see our information sheet.

**Surgery is a last resort, as the symptoms often stabilise over the long term and can be controlled by the non-surgical treatments which is detailed in our OA base of thumb information**

The most common surgical procedure is called a Trapeziectomy, which is when the Trapezium bone is removed. This is a bone at the base of the thumb, which forms part of the arthritic joint. The space where the trapezium was, is filled with a spongy pad of scar tissue. Instead of bone rubbing on bone, the pad creates a new joint. The operation can usually be carried out under regional anaesthesia. If regional anaesthesia cannot be done, you will be given a general anaesthetic.



### Milestones

- 0-2 weeks – Your hand will be placed in a bulky plaster cast to protect the joint. This must stay on for 1- 2 weeks until you come back to the clinic, when it will be removed and a removable splint given.
- 2-4 weeks – Wearing the removable splint, you can use your hand for light activity/movement exercises
- 4-6 weeks- May be able to return to work for (sedentary work)
- 4-6 weeks - driving dependent on pain levels
- 6-12 weeks- Return to work for manual jobs
- 6-12 weeks- Swimming any stroke
- 3-6 months- Full return to sport and activities

### Benefits

- Pain relief- Complete pain relief is possible in 80% of the cases. This will take 3-12 months.
- Improving Function – a return to normal use of the thumb in everyday activity

## Risks and Consequences

<b>Pillar Pain/Scar pain</b>	Affects 20% or 1 in 5 people	In this case it may take 6-12 months for scar pain to settle
<b>Infection</b>	Affects 1% or 1 in 100 people	This is generally treated with oral antibiotics. Occasionally may need re-admission for Intravenous (I.V.) antibiotics or further surgery
<b>Thumb weakness/deformity</b>		Rarely, the thumb can appear deformed and feel weak due to shortening. Usually, the strength improves within 6 months.
<b>Complex regional pain syndrome</b>	Affects 0.2% or 1 in 500 people	This can be a very serious consequence with some permanent changes including stiffness in the hand and arm. CRPS can usually be avoided by staying motivated with elevation, movement and scar massage.
<b>Nerve injury (1:700)-</b>	Affects 0.14% or 1 in 700 people	This is very rare but consequences may be prolonged pain, further surgery and permanent disability.
<b>Pain</b>	Affects 20% or 1 in 5 people	Although the intended benefit of surgery is complete pain relief, sometimes there can be some residual pain following surgery