

# What is trigger finger?

**Trigger finger is a condition that affects one or more of the hand's tendons, making it difficult to bend the affected finger or thumb.**

If the tendon becomes swollen and inflamed it can 'catch' in the tunnel it runs through (the tendon sheath). This can make it difficult to move the affected finger or thumb and can result in a clicking sensation.

## Patient eligibility criteria:

The patient's local NHS commissioning organisation will only fund this treatment if the patient meets the following eligibility criteria below:

- the patient has moderate trigger finger which has failed to respond to conservative measures and at least 2 steroid injections, **OR**
- the patient has a permanently bent (fixed deformity) that cannot be corrected.

This is because management of trigger finger should be in accordance with British Society for Surgery of the Hand (BSSH) recommendations:

### Mild (pre-triggering):

- history of pain or of catching or click
- use of pain killers.
- tendon pulling, but fully mobile finger

### Moderate:

- triggering with difficulty actively extending finger and need for passive finger extension
- option for steroid injection.

### Severe:

- fixed bent finger
- option for surgery.

The clinician in charge of the care of the patient's specific condition, usually a hospital doctor, can assist the application, if there is exceptional clinical need for the treatment to be funded. The patient's clinician must evidence clinical exceptionality and must be supported by the patient's local NHS commissioning organisation. See separate leaflet for more information on Individual Funding Request (IFRs).

## Advice and further guidance:



For more information search for 'trigger finger' at [www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk)

**Treatment policy for patients covered by NHS Solihull, Birmingham CrossCity and Birmingham South Central Clinical Commissioning Groups**