The hand is the most active and intricate part of the upper extremity, which makes it especially vulnerable to injury. There are 29 bones, 29 joints, 123 ligaments and 34 muscles in each hand that allow for a wide range of movement. Our hands also contain over 30 blood vessels, innervated by 3 major nerves that provide us with sensory information such as temperature, texture, depth, and the shape of objects.

UPPER EXTREMITY INJURIES

Our hands have the unique ability to perform precise tasks such as gripping a pencil, typing on a keyboard, or holding a fork. Imagine not being able to do these simple, everyday tasks we all take for granted. A broken wrist or finger can be extremely debilitating—even more so when it is your dominant hand. Everything from personal care to work related and recreational activities are suddenly much more difficult to do.

- One third of all acute injuries seen in emergency rooms involve the upper extremities.
- Two thirds of upper extremity injuries occur to individuals during their working years.
- The most common disabling work injuries in the United States involve the upper extremities, accounting for over one fourth of all disabling work injuries.
- One out of six disabling work injuries involve the fingers, most often due to the finger striking or being struck against a hard surface.
- One fourth of athletic injuries involve the hand.
- Children under the age of six are at the greatest risk for crushing or burning injuries of the hand.

WHAT IS HAND THERAPY?

“Hand Therapy is the art and science of rehabilitation of the upper limb, which includes the hand, wrist, elbow and shoulder girdle.” Journal of Hand Therapy

Through specialized assessment, planning and treatment, hand therapy can effectively provide postoperative rehabilitation, conservative treatment, preventative care, or industry consultation. The therapist works closely with the physician and patient to provide a continuum of care. This often starts within days of the injury or surgery right through the patient’s return to a productive lifestyle.
WHAT IS A HAND THERAPIST?
A hand therapist is qualified to provide care for a diversity of upper extremity disorders and injuries, from simple fingertip injuries to replanted extremities to chronic problems which effect upper extremity function.

Hand therapists are nationally registered occupational or physical therapists who, through advanced continuing education, clinical experience, and integration of anatomy, physiology and kinesiology, have become experts in treatment of upper extremity conditions.

At PVHMC, our team of hand specialists is led by a Certified Hand Therapist (CHT) with advanced certification. A certified hand therapist has a minimum of five years of clinical experience, successfully passed an examination of advanced clinical skills and theory in upper extremity rehabilitation, and met the mandated criteria to maintain this specialized credential.

WHY CHOOSE PVHMC FOR HAND THERAPY?
Evidence-based techniques, clinical reasoning, differential evaluation, state-of-the-art treatment approaches and advanced technology all contribute to strength of our program. The ability to resolve cases from the simple, to the most complicated and challenging, makes our expertise in the field highly regarded throughout Los Angeles, Orange, San Bernardino and Riverside counties.

WHO IS A CANDIDATE FOR HAND THERAPY?
Patients of all ages, from pediatric to geriatric, can expect satisfactory functional outcomes. Examples of some of the upper extremity problems we treat include:

ORTHOPEDIC CONDITIONS
• Post traumatic injuries (with or without surgery)
• Tendon lacerations
• Nerve lacerations
• Amputations
• Impingement or entrapment of nerves and tendons
• Neuropaxia injuries and pathology
• Hand, wrist and arm fractures

RHEUMATOID CONDITIONS
• Osteoarthritis
• Rheumatoid arthritis
• Gout

CUMULATIVE DISEASES
• Carpal tunnel syndrome
• de Quervain’s tenosynovitis
• Dupuytren’s disease

CONGENITAL ABNORMALITIES
• Syndactyly
• Madelung deformity

SKIN CONDITIONS
• Grafting and flaps

GOALS OF HAND THERAPY
• Restore or improve function
• Increase motion
• Relieve pain
• Increase independence in activities of daily living (ADL)
• Increase strength and dexterity for return to home, sports or work activities

WHAT DOES HAND AND WRIST UPPER EXTREMITY REHABILITATION INCLUDE?
A hand/upper extremity therapist will provide each patient with an individualized treatment plan.

• Complete and thorough initial evaluation
• Appropriate treatment goals
• Patient education
• Specific post-op protocols which may include:
  • Tendon and nerve repair
  • Sensation re-education for hypersensitivity, ethesias or paresthesias
  • Manual therapy
  • Therapeutic exercises and activities
  • Gross and fine motor coordination exercises
  • Use of the Baltimore Therapeutic Exercise (BTE) equipment
• Custom splinting

CUSTOM SPLINTING (ORTHOSIS)
When needed, our CHT will provide the patient with a custom static/dynamic finger, hand or upper extremity orthosis to help:

• Control edema and pain
• Improve mobility, strength and functional status
• Restore or improve function
• Appropriate goal setting

WHAT IS THE COST OF THE PROGRAM?
1. Talk to your doctor about your problem and ask if managing it through occupational hand therapy is appropriate for your medical condition.
   • A prescription from your doctor is required.

2. To schedule your first appointment for “Hand Therapy” at PVHMC call us at our Pomona outpatient clinic listed on the back panel of this brochure.
   • Please arrive 15 minutes early for your first therapy appointment.

3. Sessions typically last about one hour. During your first visit, a hand therapist will:
   • Review your doctor’s prescription for therapy
   • Perform an initial evaluation of your condition
   • Establish an appropriate treatment plan
   • Schedule you for follow-up visits

WHAT SHOULD I WEAR OR BRING?
• Wear loose fitting clothing with short sleeves
• Bring any assistive device you may be using
• Bring your insurance card and co-payment

WHAT IS THE COST OF THE PROGRAM?
• Hand, wrist and upper extremity treatments are covered by Medicare and most insurance carriers.
• Insurance co-pays apply to treatment.
• Cash rates are available.