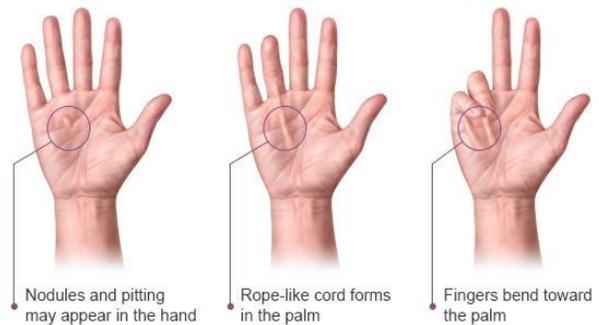


Dupuytren's Disease

Dupuytren's disease is a condition that affects the **fascia**, the fibrous layer of tissue that lies underneath the skin in the palm and fingers. In patients with Dupuytren's, the fascia thickens then tightens over time. This causes the fingers to be pulled inward towards the palm, resulting in what is known as a **Dupuytren's contracture**. In some patients, a worsening Dupuytren's contracture can interfere with hand function, making it difficult for them to perform their daily activities.



Nonsurgical Treatment

Steroid injections. Corticosteroids are powerful anti-inflammatory medications that can be injected into a painful nodule. In some cases, a corticosteroid injection may slow the progression of a contracture. The effectiveness of a steroid injection varies from patient to patient.

Splinting. Splinting *is not known to prevent* the progression of a finger contracture. Forceful stretching of the contracted finger may not be helpful and, in fact, could cause an injury to the finger or hand.

Splinting may be used after surgery for Dupuytren's contractures to protect the surgical site. However, it is not known if it reduces the risk of recurrent contractures or tightening of the healing wound.

Surgical Treatment

If the contracture interferes with hand function, your provider may recommend surgical treatment. The goal of the surgery is to reduce the contracture and improve motion in the affected fingers.

There is no known cure for Dupuytren's contracture. However, surgery is intended to "set back the clock" by reducing the restricting effect of the cords by either disrupting or removing them. Unfortunately, the healing tissues will form the same potential to develop cords in the future, but the gains in hand function can still be substantial.

The surgical procedures most commonly performed for Dupuytren's contracture are **fasciotomy and subtotal palmar fasciectomy** to remove the thickened fascia underneath the skin.

