

## Base of Thumb Arthritis - Ligament Reconstruction

### INDICATIONS

- Early stage arthritis of the CMC (base of thumb) joint with instability and joint subluxation.
- Aim is to redirect the bone and change where the joint surface rubs together to more normal areas of cartilage.
- Does not cure arthritis.

### INVESTIGATIONS

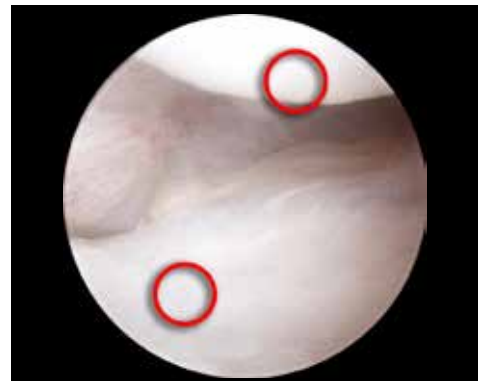
- Plain x-rays are usually all that is required.
- May perform CT scan to determine degree of subluxation.

### SURGERY

- Day or overnight procedure, most commonly under general anaesthetic.
- An arthroscopy may be performed to evaluate the articular (cartilage) surface prior to reconstruction.
- Via curved incision at the base of the thumb with a second incision in the mid forearm.
- A length of tendon is harvested (FCR) and woven through the base of the metacarpal and trapezium (bones on either side of the joint).
- Usually takes approximately 60 minutes.

### POST OPERATIVELY

- Immediately post operatively the hand is usually quite numb due to local anaesthetic used for the surgery.
- The hand and wrist will be in a plaster backslab and the fingers will be free.
- It is important to keep the hand elevated after surgery especially in the first 72 hours post op to reduce/limit swelling.
- Keep the fingers moving, all the way straight and bent into a fist to limit stiffness and help reduce swelling.
- May use the hand for light activities as comfortable but avoid heavy activities.
- Keep the dressing clean and dry.
- Review at 2 weeks for wound check and to change to removable plastic splint.
- Begin Scar massage to soften wounds and desensitise scars.
- Takes 3-4 months to fully recover.



(Joint Surface with adequate cartilage – cartilage is marked)



(Joint Surface Loss of cartilage, bone only - remaining cartilage is marked)

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