

The following activities and exercises will help your child to develop his hand and finger skills. Commercially available playdough can be used for these activities or you can make your own. If you make your own get your child to help!

Playdough recipe

- ▶ 1 tablespoon cooking oil
- ▶ 1 cup flour
- ▶ ½ cup salt
- ▶ 1 tablespoon cream of tartar
- ▶ 1 cup boiling water
- ▶ Food colouring

Mix all the ingredients together using an electric mixer or a wooden spoon. Knead the mixture into a ball and wrap it up in plastic wrap immediately.

Once the playdough cools, remove the plastic wrap and store in an air tight container.



General activities

- ▶ On the table, roll the playdough into a sausage keeping your fingers straight. Try turning your sausage into a snake, mould it into letters or numbers, or plait two or three sausages together.
- ▶ Roll a piece of playdough between the palms of both hands until it is a smooth ball.

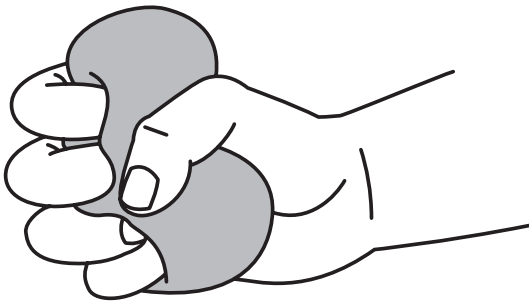
- ▶ Flatten a large piece of playdough and make a handprint.
- ▶ Roll playdough flat using a rolling pin and cut out using biscuit or animal cutters.
- ▶ Squeeze playdough through a garlic crusher to make 'worms' or 'noodles'. These can be used as decorations such as hair for a person or cheese for a pizza.
- ▶ Mould the playdough into animals, people, food, jewellery or volcanoes.
- ▶ Make pretend food such as a pizza, sausage or cake then cut it up using a knife and fork or scissors.
- ▶ Make a bird's nest filled with eggs. Roll a ball of playdough between the palms of both your hands. Poke your thumb down into the centre of the ball and pinch all around to form the sides of the nest. Then make eggs by rolling the playdough into balls between your thumb and index finger.
- ▶ Squash all the playdough together when you have finished and store in an airtight container.



Please talk to your occupational therapist if you have any queries about the above information.

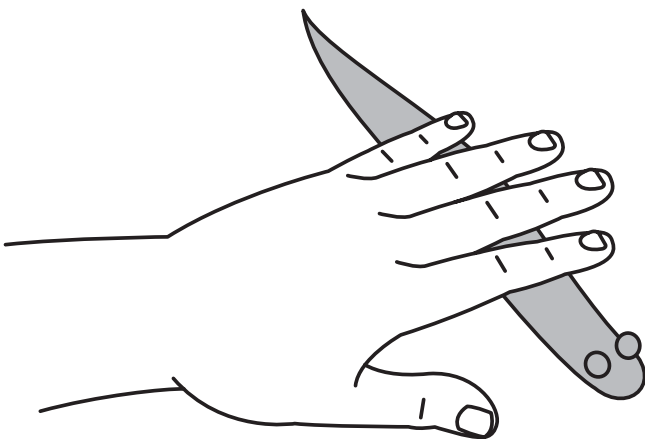
1. Squeezing and oozing

Place a ball of playdough in the palm of your hand and squeeze as hard as possible. Make the playdough ooze out between your fingers.



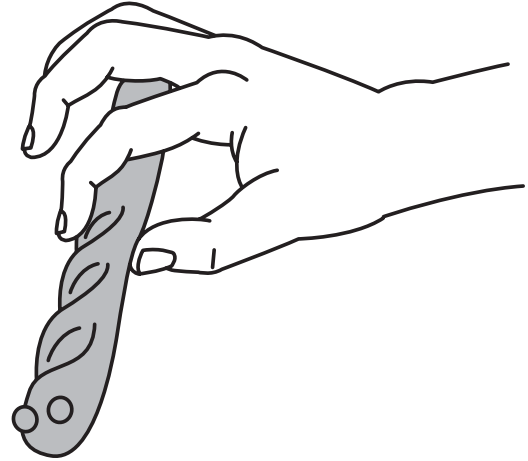
2. Make a snake

On the table, roll the playdough into a snake keeping your fingers straight.



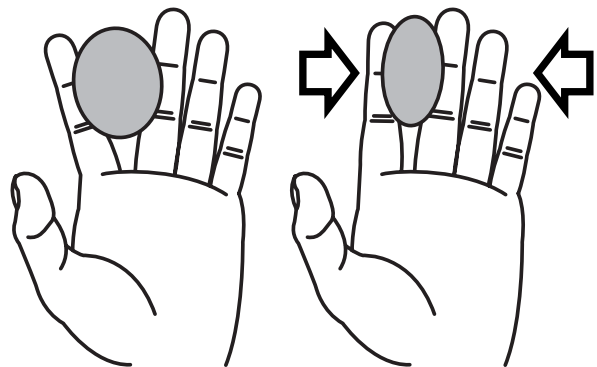
3. Pinch the snake

Pinch the snake all the way along, from head to tail.



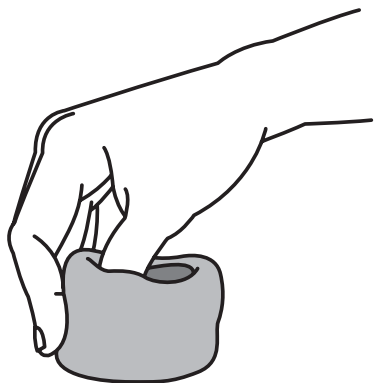
4. Finger scissors

Place a ball of playdough between two fingers and squeeze your fingers together. Repeat with your other fingers.



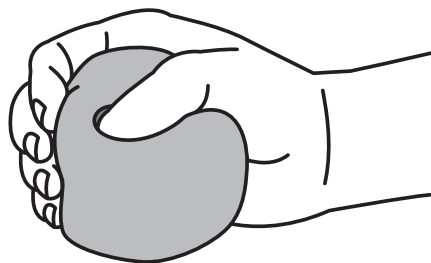
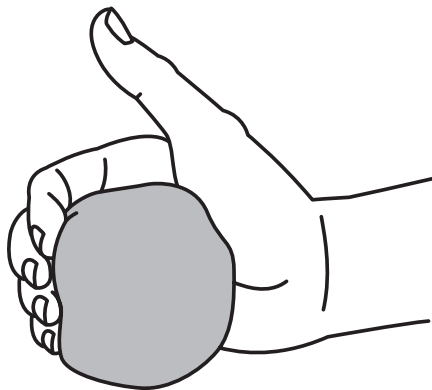
5. Make a bowl

Place a ball of playdough on the table. Place your thumb in the middle and pinch all the way around to make a bowl.



6. Hide 'n' seek

Shape the playdough into a ball. Place your hand and forearm on the table and grasp the playdough with your thumb pointing up. Bend your thumb and press it deeply into the playdough, then pull it out again.

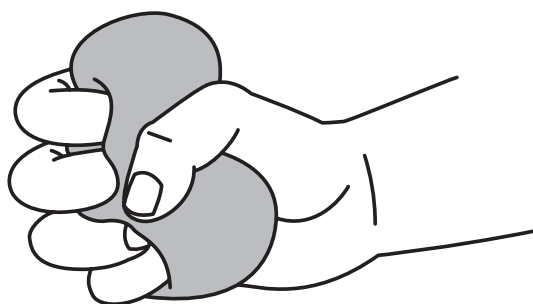


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To do these exercises you will need a container of exercise putty. This is available from The Equipment Distribution Centre at the Royal Children's Hospital or at some Pharmacies. Please talk to your occupational therapist about the type of exercise putty you need.

1. Squeeze exercise putty (Finger flexion)

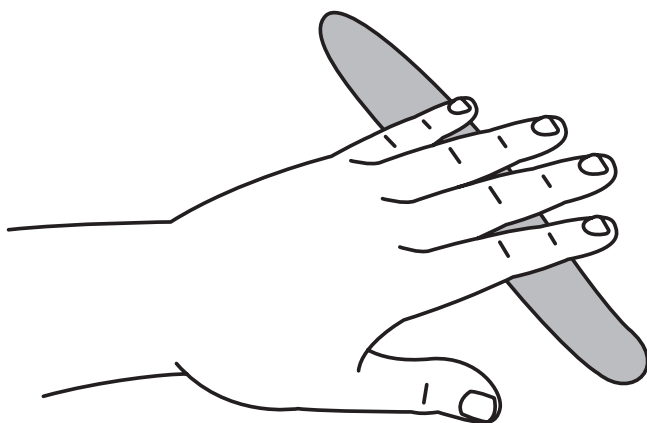
Place a ball of putty in the palm of your hand and squeeze it until the putty oozes out between your fingers.



Repeat _____ times. Do _____ times per day.

2. Roll exercise putty (Finger extension)

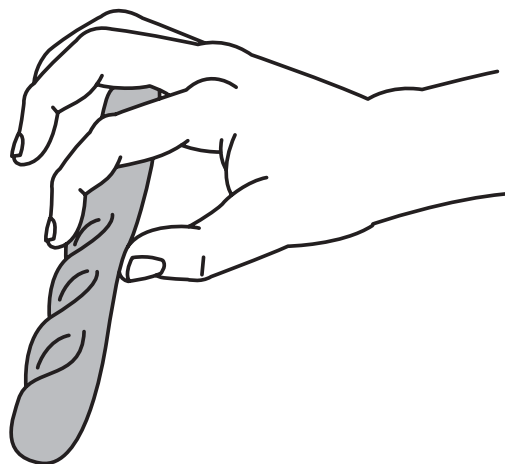
On the table, roll the putty into a sausage keeping your fingers straight.



Repeat _____ times. Do _____ times per day.

3. Pinch exercise putty (Isolated opposition)

Pinch the putty from one end of the sausage to the other. Try to pinch until your fingers and thumb meet.

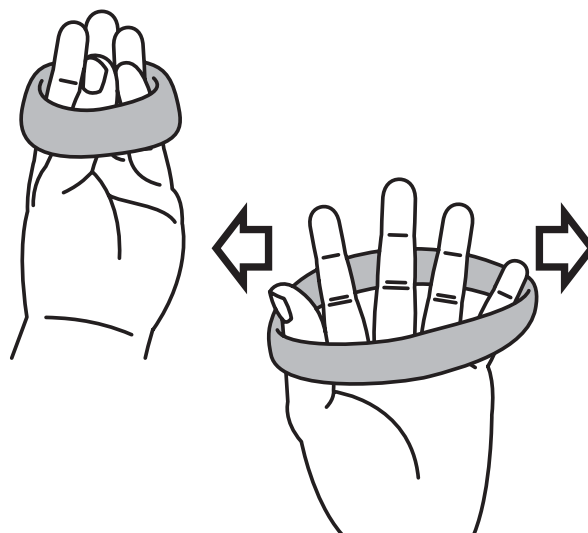


Repeat _____ times. Do _____ times per day.

4. Finger and thumb spreading

(Finger and thumb extension and abduction)

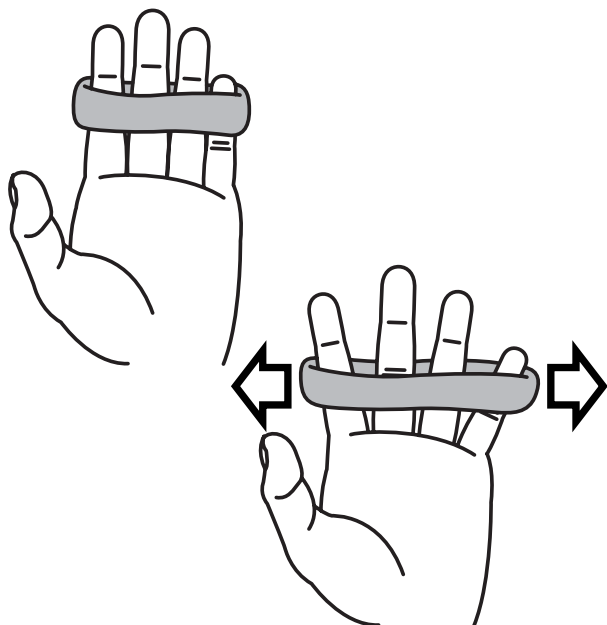
Place your thumb and fingers together. Place a ring of putty around the outside of the fingers and thumb. Spread your fingers and thumb as far as possible.



Repeat _____ times. Do _____ times per day.

5. Finger spreading (Finger abduction)

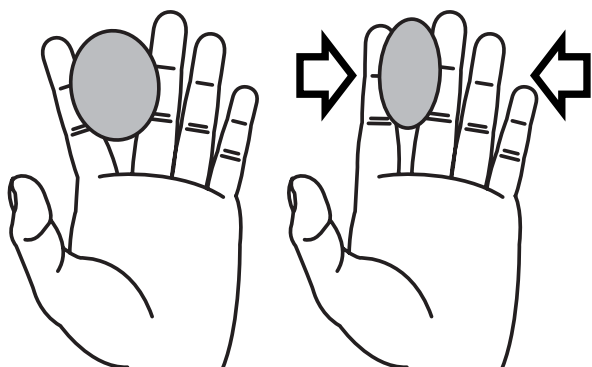
Place a ring of putty around your fingers. Spread fingers apart as much as possible.



Repeat _____ times. Do _____ times per day.

6. Finger squeezing (Finger adduction)

Place a ball of putty between two of your fingers and squeeze your fingers together. Repeat with your other fingers.

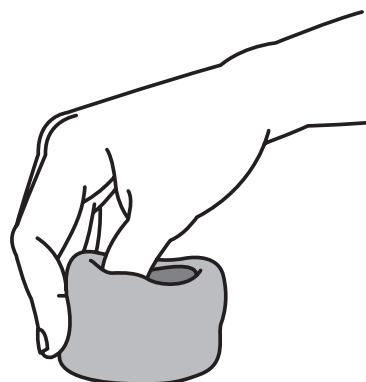


Repeat _____ times. Do _____ times per day.

7. Finger and thumb squeezing

(Opposition and intrinsic finger flexion)

Place a ball of putty on the table. Place your thumb in the middle and pinch all the way around.

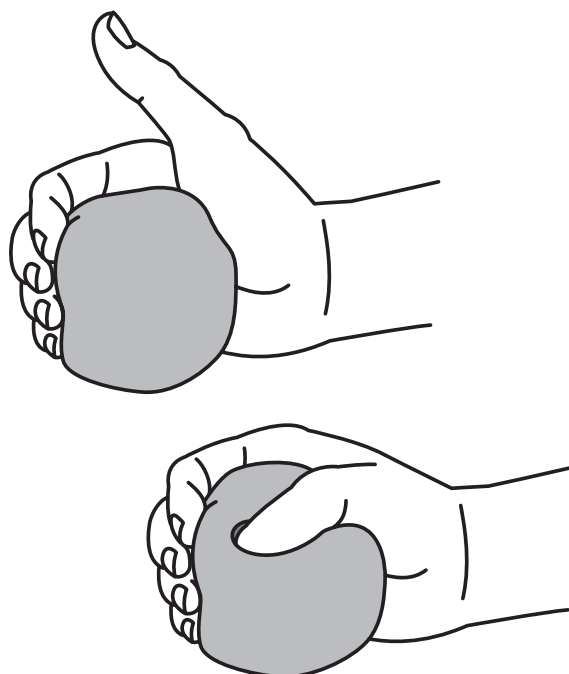


Repeat _____ times. Do _____ times per day.

8. Thumb bending and straightening

(Thumb flexion and extension)

Shape the putty into a ball. Place your hand and forearm on the table, and grasp the putty with your thumb pointing up. Bend your thumb and press it deeply into the putty, then pull it out again.



Repeat _____ times. Do _____ times per day.

Please talk to your occupational therapist if you have any queries about the above exercises.