

BOB ICB and Frimley ICB Priorities Committee Clinical Commissioning Policy Statement

Policy Number/ Name	BOBFPC23 Trigger Finger
Date of BOB ICB Adoption	January 2024

Trigger finger (also known as stenosing tenosynovitis or stenosing tenovaginitis) is a condition that affects the tendons in the hand. When the affected finger or thumb is bent towards the palm, the tendon gets stuck and the finger clicks or locks.

Mild cases which cause no loss of function require no treatment or avoidance of activities which precipitate triggering and may resolve spontaneously.

Patients may benefit from advice and conservative treatment that includes:

- Rest from activities that aggravate the condition (if that is an option for the patient)
- Non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs to reduce pain and inflammation if not contraindicated
- wearing a splint for 3-12 weeks
- for appropriate patients, one or two corticosteroid injections in the area of tendon sheath thickening.

Surgical intervention for trigger finger will be funded if a patient meets at least one of the following criteria:

- who fail to respond to conservative treatment, including no response following corticosteroid injections
- where the finger is permanently locked in the palm
- who have previously had 2 other trigger digits unsuccessfully treated with appropriate non-operative methods;
- the patient has diabetes.

Surgery for mild trigger finger symptoms is not normally funded.

This policy statement has been informed by the guidance produced by the [British Society for Surgery of the Hand \(2016\)](#) and [recommendations](#) from the NHS England Evidence-Based Interventions Programme (2019).

Primary diagnosis code

M65.3 Trigger finger

Procedure code

T72.3 Release of constriction of sheath of tendon

NOTES:

- Potentially exceptional circumstances may be considered by a patient's ICB where there is evidence of significant health status impairment (e.g. inability to perform activities of daily living) and there is evidence that the intervention sought would improve the individual's health status.
- This policy was developed and recommended by Thames Valley Priorities Committee which was the predecessor of Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire, and Berkshire West ICB and Frimley ICB Priorities Committee.
- This policy will be reviewed in the light of new evidence or new national guidance, e.g. from NICE.
- BOBFPC clinical policies can be viewed at [Clinical Commissioning Policy Statements & IFRs | BOB ICB](#)

Version	Date	Reason for change
Version 1	May 2015	
Version 1.1	July 2019	Conservative treatment advice and criteria for surgery have been updated to reflect new guidance; the classification of the severity of trigger finger by the British Society for Surgery of the Hand has been removed as it is no longer available.
Version 2	May 2022	National guidance and evidence reviewed. No change to policy