

Agee Digit Widget™

PART TWO IN A SERIES

DUPUYTREN'S AND THE DIGIT WIDGET



The Digit Widget is a mini external fixator that exerts an extension torque to reverse PIP flexion contractures. The extension torque stimulates growth of the contracted palmar tissues without adding surgical trauma and scarring to the finger. Multiple clinical problems may create a force imbalance across the PIP joint. A force imbalance favoring the flexors leads to a flexion contracture.

One of the more common causes of PIP joint contracture is Dupuytren's Disease. In Part Two of our series, the use of the Digit Widget in Dupuytren's is discussed. The first example describes a two stage procedure using the Digit Widget pre-fasciectomy to improve surgical access to the fingers and palm. The second example describes a case where an open release and the Digit Widget were performed concurrently. In both cases, the Digit Widget was utilized as the post-op PIP extension splint.



Example I: A two stage surgical procedure was chosen for this patient. All structures, including the skin, blood vessels and nerves were contracted. Skin maceration was present. Rapid correction may have compromised blood vessels and nerves. A skin graft may have been needed. Initially Digit Widgets were installed on the involved fingers. Five weeks after Digit Widget application, fasciectomy was performed. The devices were worn for another 8 weeks. Overall, he gained 60° extension on the PIP of the long finger and 74° on the PIP of the ring finger.

Example 2: A single stage surgical approach consisting of the McCash open palm technique and digital fasciectomy was used to correct a 110° PIP flexion contracture. Following these procedures, a 45° contracture remained. The Digit Widget was then applied and steroids were injected into the collateral ligaments. The Digit Widget was worn for four weeks. Within ten days of surgery, the patient had full extension. At ten weeks post-op, the patient had a residual 15° contracture.



NEXT IN SERIES - EXTENSOR TENDON AND THE DIGIT WIDGET...

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