



UNDERSTANDING YOUR SURGERY

Thumb CMC Joint Replacement

Overview

The CMC joint at the base of your thumb is a common site of arthritis. This operation removes the worn joint and replaces it with a small artificial implant, relieving pain while keeping useful pinch and grip for everyday tasks.

About Your Procedure

Why this surgery is recommended

- Painful arthritis at the base of the thumb
- Difficulty opening jars, writing, turning keys or gripping
- When splints and injections no longer give lasting relief

What happens during surgery

- An incision at the base of the thumb
- Worn joint surfaces removed and replaced with a small implant
- Surrounding tendons preserved and balanced
- General or regional anaesthetic; usually a day procedure

After Your Surgery

- Thumb in a cast or firm splint for **4 weeks**
- A removable splint from Week 4 until **8–12 weeks**
- Finger exercises start immediately to keep them supple
- Hand therapy is strongly recommended
- No driving for **6 weeks** after surgery

Important precautions:

- Do not pinch or grip with the thumb for the first 8 weeks — the implant must settle
- Wear the splint at night for 3 months
- Heavy manual work may risk the implant long-term — discuss with Dr Cosic
- Hand therapy is essential for the best result

Your Recovery at a Glance

WEEKS 0–4

Cast on. Finger exercises only

WEEKS 4–8

Removable splint. Gentle thumb movement

WEEKS 8–16

Strengthening. Progressive pinch and grip

WEEKS 16–26

Return to full daily activities and work

QUESTIONS YOU MAY WISH TO ASK

- ? What does my recovery look like for my job or sport?
- ? What are the main risks, and how likely are they for me?
- ? What pain relief will I need, and for how long?
- ? When can I return to work, and is travel safe early on?

MY NOTES
