

# Percutaneous pulley release

## REFERRER INFORMATION SHEET

The following information is provided to medical practitioners to assist with efficient referral procedures.

If you have any further questions regarding this procedure please contact your nearest branch or visit our website.

[bensonradiology.com.au](http://bensonradiology.com.au)

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### About the procedure

Percutaneous pulley release is a treatment specifically for 'trigger finger' secondary to A1 pulley thickening.

The procedure involves the use of ultrasound guidance and a modified 18 gauge needle to cut the A1 pulley.

This treatment is best reserved for fingers, not thumbs. While it is possible to perform on thumbs, the digital nerves of the thumb are more closely associated with the A1 pulley than in the fingers—potentially increasing the procedure's risk of neural injury.

The procedure is not appropriate for other causes of triggering such as A2 pulley thickening or joint arthropathy.

### Patient selection

Prior to considering this procedure, patients should first have a diagnostic ultrasound and a corticosteroid injection.

The procedure is usually performed in those cases that have not responded to the corticosteroid.

As an alternative to surgery, percutaneous pulley release is usually successful, although some patients may still ultimately require surgery to treat their trigger finger.

### Information for your patient

There is no preparation required for this procedure. The patient may continue to take blood-thinning medication.

The procedure takes around 15 minutes and is performed under local anaesthesia with no sedation. The procedure is usually well tolerated.

A sterile technique with real time ultrasound guidance is used. No stitches are required as there is only a small hole at needle entry.

Benson Radiology performs the procedure on an outpatient basis at our Ashford branch.

Someone should be available to drive the patient home afterwards.

### Risks

The most common risks of the procedure are pain and swelling.

As with any procedure, infection and bleeding are also possible.

There have been reports of nerve, artery and tendon injury with the procedure, however, this is unlikely. In the rare event of these complications, a surgical opinion may be required.

### Post-procedure care

In some patients, tenosynovitis often co-exists with triggering and may persist post procedure, causing a continuation of symptoms.

As mentioned, some swelling and pain can be expected. This should subside over the course of a few weeks.

Pain and swelling can be relieved by resting the hand as much as possible in the first week, and keeping it elevated on a pillow while seated.

Ice packs and oral analgesia may be useful.

Any increasing pain, marked swelling, redness and pus from the needle entry site may be signs of infection.

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### Follow up

Benson Radiology will follow up with the patient approximately one week post procedure with a telephone call to monitor the progress.

Full benefit from the procedure may take a few weeks or more.

Benson Radiology recommends that patients consult with a hand therapist post procedure.

### Location

Percutaneous pulley release is performed at our Ashford Specialist Centre branch.

For more information about this procedure, contact the branch on (08) 8113 6700.