



• Frisbie Memorial Hospital

• Marsh Brook Rehabilitation Service

• Wentworth-Douglass Hospital

INFORMATION SHEET FOR CMC ARTHRITIS **“RULES OF THUMB”**

You can affect your pain in many ways. The main “rule of thumb” is to “listen to the pain”. Pain aggravates joint damage. Doing activities without pain helps to reduce damage. Your splint should help to reduce pain when worn during daily tasks. With any activity that causes pain, try to figure out a way to do the activity pain-free. Some simple devices are also available that can help, such as jar openers, pens with enlarged grasps, and scissors that have a spring. You can find most of these devices at local department stores or kitchen stores.

Points to remember to help your thumb:

- 1) Avoid the most stressful activities
 - The ones that involve a strong pinch
 - Activities that apply pressure with the heel of the hand, such as stapling, squeezing bottles
- 2) Decrease force and tension during activities
 - Use a lighter touch
 - Hold a pen lightly
 - Don't hold a book – support it on a book rest or cushion
- 3) Avoid activities that involve holding one position for a long time, such as sewing/knitting
- 4) Respect pain
 - Pain that lasts greater than 2 hours after an activity is a danger sign!

Devices that might make the task easier:

- ✓ Electric can opener
- ✓ Jar openers
- ✓ Scissors with a spring
- ✓ Enlarged pen grips
- ✓ Adaptive key holders
- ✓ Electric stapler
- ✓ Enlarged utensil handles

For further information:

www.arthritis.org

www.arthritisupport.com

North Coast: Functional Solutions Catalog, 800-235-7054

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