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The definition of urgent elective surgery that can be performed during the Covid-19 response that was provided by the AHSS has been modified for clarity and to minimise the risk of misunderstanding.

Emergencies:

- Infection
- Major carpal dislocation and fractures
- Displaced finger fractures and dislocations
- Major skin loss and lacerations
- Acute flexor tendon injury
- Amputations
- Injuries with ischaemic digits of the hand and upper limb

Category 1:

- Tendon ruptures or lacerations
- Severe carpal tunnel compression with constant numbness, muscle wasting or unable to sleep (this does not mean waking up several times a night)
- Locked trigger fingers (not locking trigger fingers)
- Joint instability due to ligament disruption (should preferably be managed nonoperatively if possible)
- Fingertip lacerations - consider cleaning and debridement under local anaesthetic and dressings (e.g.IV3000)

Almost-Never Category 2:

- Tenosynovitis without severe loss of motion
- Mild carpal tunnel syndrome (symptoms at night only or after doing heavy labouring tasks)
- Dupuytren's disease of any type
- Acute scaphoid fracture unless there is displacement and it is part of a perilunate ligament injury
- Scaphoid non-union
- Arthritis of any region
- Minimally or undisplaced phalangeal and metacarpal fractures that can be managed with splints
- Arthroplasty
- Post traumatic joint contractures
- Late presenting joint dislocation
- Wrist sprains without imaging evidence of displacement or significant ligament disruption
- Scapholunate dissociation
- TFCC tears
- Wrist arthroscopy unless it is used to treat fracture dislocations of the wrist or sepsis

Sincerely

Jeff Ecker
President of the Australian Hand Surgery Society