



## **Therapeutic Putty for Seniors**

“Theraputty” is a wonderful medium that allows you to engage your creative spirit. It is malleable and non-toxic, easy to make and to store. But did you know it is also used for exercise and stress relief and helpful for those with memory care needs? McLean’s Outpatient and Home Care therapists recommend it to their patients, for improving dexterity; strengthening hands, fingers and wrists; and alleviating stress. Weak fingers and hands have a large impact on the quality of life for seniors and theraputty is the perfect tool to help!

It is simple to make it at home. Store in an airtight container to use over and over!

### Ingredients you will need:

4 oz. white school glue

¼ cup cornstarch

¼ cup warm water

¼ tsp Borax

1-2 popsicle sticks

2-5 drops food coloring (optional)

Several drops essential oil (optional)

Airtight container

Follow these simple instructions:

- Combine the glue and cornstarch in a bowl and slowly mix together with a popsicle stick.
- Mix the water and Borax together in a separate bowl.
- If you are adding food coloring and/or essential oil, add to the glue and cornstarch mixture and blend fully.
- Next add the water and Borax solution to the glue and cornstarch. Mix together as well as you can with a popsicle stick or stirrer, and then it's time to get your hands dirty! Begin by poking your fingers into the mixture, to let the water penetrate inside. It's ok to have some leftover water, but try to let as much as possible infuse, to make the dough less sticky as it forms!

And there you have it – theraputty!

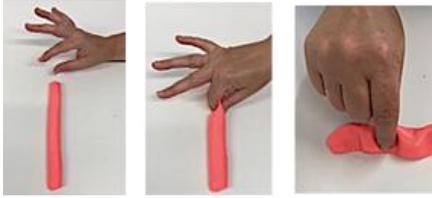
**Try these simple exercises, recommended by McLean's physical therapists!**

Putty Finger Squeeze



- Place the putty in the center of your palm and squeeze your fingers.
- Move the putty around, squeeze again and repeat.
- One set of ten repetitions, once a day.

### Dough Pinch



- Roll putty into a long roll.
- Pinch putty down its length, alternating thumb and index, thumb and middle, etc.
- Repeat sets for ten minutes, once a day.

### Putty Finger Press



- Form putty in ball between your index and middle finger.
- Squeeze all of your fingers tightly together.
- Repeat with all fingers, being sure to use a small piece of putty.
- One set of ten repetitions, once a day.



### Putty Thumb Press Down

- Hold putty in your hand.
- Bend thumb and press your thumb deeply into the putty.
- Lift it out slowly.
- One set of ten repetitions daily.



### Putty Thumb to Fingertip

- Place putty between the tip of your thumb to the tip of your index finger.
- Squeeze.
- Repeat with each finger with thumb.
- Repeat one set of ten repetitions daily.



### Putty Thumb Pull Back

- Form the putty into a ring.
- Place the ring around the base of your fingers and thumb.
- Move thumb outward, away from your palm and repeat.
- One set of ten repetitions daily.

### **Use theraputty to reduce stress and tension**

To alleviate stress, use your theraputty as you would use a stress ball. Hold a ball of it in the center of your palm and squeeze your fingers. Not too hard!

Roll, squeeze or pull it apart if that is your preference. Adding an essential oil like lavender, will create a more soothing affect.

Watch Tully Meyer, McLean Home Care & Hospice Community Liaison, for a detailed demonstration on the video gallery of our website;  
<https://mcleancare.org/gallery/video-gallery/>.

Enjoy!