

Twiddlemuffs

How to support patients with dementia by knitting a hand muff

Do you knit? Have you heard of 'twiddlemuffs'?

They're knitted muffs with items attached to keep dementia patients' hands active and busy. They contain strands of textured ribbons, beads, and various fabrics attached both inside and outside.

People with dementia often have restless hands and like to have something to keep their hands occupied. It provides a wonderful source of visual, tactile and sensory stimulation, and keeps hands snug and warm at the same time.

We are hoping that volunteers (staff, patients and visitors) will come forward to put their knitting skills to good use to help us to create more twiddlemuffs as part of our dementia awareness work. Don't worry if you are not an expert; the pattern is very simple. If you aren't a knitter but still want to support the cause we would welcome donations of wool, buttons, beads, ribbons, zips, or anything else that could be used to enhance the muffs safely.



If you would like further information about twiddlemuffs, please contact:

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If you would like to make and donate a twiddlemuff or materials, please drop them off at the main reception at our hospitals at Basingstoke and Winchester, or the Minor Injuries Unit at our Andover hospital

Materials

- This muff pattern is perfect for using up left over and odd balls of wool. Different textures of wool are also good for stimulation
- Needles: 6.5mm straight needles or 8mm circular
- Beads, zips, ribbons, things that can be twiddled with but will not break and are not sharp to touch or brittle.

Directions

- Cuff Cast on 40 stitches using 2 strands of double knitting wool. You can also use 1 strand of chunky wool
- Work in stocking stitch (knit a line, purl a line) for 11 inches (28cm).

Muff body

- Continue with stocking stitch and use up any oddments of various textures of wool. For example: chunky, mohair, snuggly, eskimo, ribbon and chenille
- Knit unit work measures 23 inches (58.5cm)
- Cast off.

Finishing and decoration

- Neatly sew the long edges together with purl side facing you
- Turn the muff inside out
- Push the cuff up inside the muff body and neatly sew together the two short ends
- Now is the time to decorate your twiddlemuff. Here are a few things to consider: choose a good variety of decorations such as beads and colours
- Try to include at least six decorations on the outside and four on the inside. You can add more if you like
- Make sure everything is sewn on tight so they cannot be pulled off, and that there are no loose threads
- Include bits and bobs on the inside too. Agitated hands can then be soothed and kept warm at the same time.