Preventing Cuts from Meat Slicers – Kitchen Safety – Fatality File

A man who severed hand on meat slicer in workplace incident is now learning how to use it again.

A man has had part of his hand re-attached after it was severed during a horror workplace incident.

Lorry Cooper 23, was working at a meat packing factory when a slicer went through the middle of his right hand, cutting his four fingers off.

“It’s pretty terrifying when you see your hand missing,” Cooper told reporters on Tuesday.

“Most of it wasn’t pain, a lot of it was phantom pain – where you can still feel your hand but its not there.

Cooper said he remained pretty calm after the incident and only remembers glimpses of it.

The 23-year-old was rushed into surgery, with his severed hand placed on ice by a quick-thinking colleague.

Surgeon Doctor Theo Birch told reporters it was a time-sensitive injury but the fact that it was a clean cut made it easier.

“We brought the amputated segment back in…we plated the bone with plates and screws… then we did the deep tendons of the hand…then concentrated on the blood vessels,” Birch said.

“We were pretty fortunate that given the nature of the injury it was a really clean cut, almost a surgical incision across the

entire section of the mid palm of the hand," Surgeon Doctor Andrew Hadj added.

The almost eight-hour surgery was very complex and meticulous but proved to be successful.

"Not only have we managed to keep the hand alive, obviously that's the main aim, but also having it functioning and having it functioning so early," Birch said of seeing Cooper's fingers moving eight hours after the surgery.

Birch said Cooper's injury is hugely rare.

The 23-year-old is now learning how to use his dominant hand again and spends more than five hours a week in hand therapy sessions.

He says he's learnt to work around the injury and has gotten used to being one handed.

"You're fighting against your hand to do things and while you're doing that you're always in pain."

When asked about his hairstyle, Cooper said his mum styles it for him.

He is expected to have a functional hand but still has a long way to go in terms of rehabilitation.