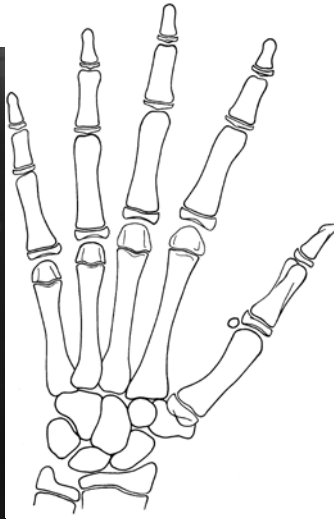


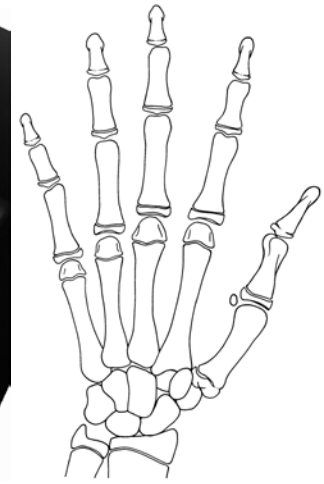
Stage 1 The key finding in stage 1 is that all of the digital epiphyses are not covered. In this case, the patient is at the end of stage 1. Particularly noticeable at the third middle phalanx, the epiphysis is not as wide as the metaphysis. More often, this finding is most noticeable on the fifth middle phalanx and metacarpal head.



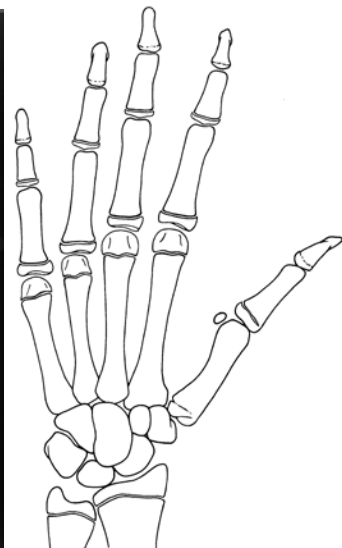
Stage 2 The key finding in stage 2 is that all of the digital epiphyses are covered. In this case, the patient is near the end of stage 2. The epiphyses are now all as wide as their metaphyses (covered). The dorsal and palmar surfaces of the metacarpal heads are clearly delineated. There is some capping of the second through fifth proximal phalanges but nowhere else.



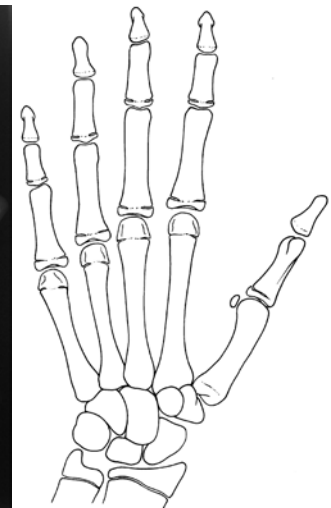
Stage 3 The key finding in stage 3 is that the preponderance of the epiphyses cap their metaphyses. The capping is a small bend over the metaphyseal edge. In the metacarpals, the second through fifth heads are wider than the metaphyses. The epiphyses cap the thumb metacarpal and all of the digits.



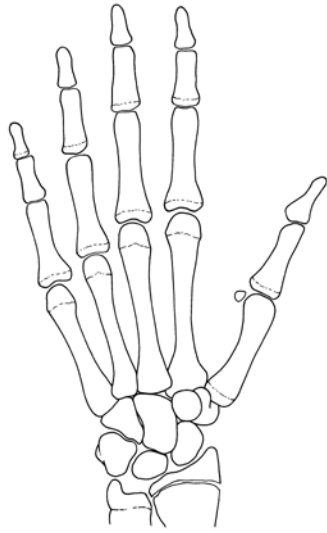
Stage 4 The key feature of stage 4 is the beginning of distal phalangeal physal closure. In this case, the distal phalangeal physis of the thumb appears closed on the radiograph, but its rotation makes it more difficult to see than the other digits. The distal phalangeal physes of the second through fifth digits are beginning to close. Physal closure starts in the center of the physis. The remainder of the digits are fully capped, and the metacarpal heads are wider than their metaphyses as in stage 3.



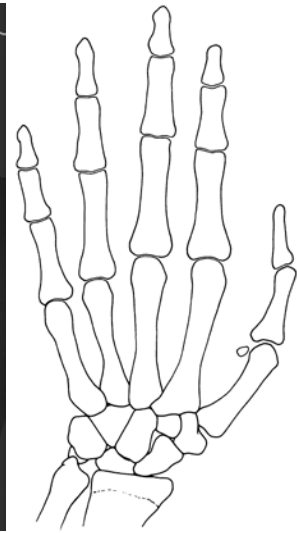
Stage 5 The key feature of stage 5 is that all of the distal phalangeal physes are closed. If there is any black (growth cartilage) rather than white (physal scar) in the physis, the radiograph remains as stage 4. The remainder of the epiphyses are capped, and the metacarpal heads are wider than the metaphyses (see stage 3 as demonstrated in Figs. 3-A and 3-B).



Stage 6 The key feature of stage 6 is that some of the proximal or middle phalangeal physes are closing. In this stage, all of the distal phalangeal physes are closed and some of the proximal and middle phalangeal physes are closing. The second through fifth metacarpal physes typically stay open longer than those of the other small bones. When the metacarpal physes go from black (physis) to white (physal scar), then the physis is considered "closed" or "fused" for this staging system.



Stage 7 The key feature of stage 7 is that all of the physes, except for those of the distal parts of the radius and ulna, are closed. There are no black physeal lines remaining for any digits or metacarpals. Stage 7 ends when the distal radial and ulnar physes are white (physeal scar) rather than black (persistent physis).



Stage 8 The key finding of stage 8 is closure of all physes. The residual physeal lines may appear white, but there are no black physeal lines.