

HOW IS IT TREATED? (cont...)

(2) Splint:

- You are advised to use a wrist splint (See picture) usually to wear at night, to hold your wrist in neutral position. This allows for maximum space in the tunnel, reducing the pressure on your median nerve. About 1 in 3 patients find these helpful, with no other treatment needed.



(3) Medicine and/or injection:

- Doctor may give you medicine to reduce wrist swelling and alleviate pain.
- Local steroid injection into the carpal tunnel also can give you some relief from the symptoms. Symptom may recur after a period of relief following steroid injection.

(4) Surgery:

- Surgery is an option if your symptoms are severe or other treatment fail.
- Surgery involves a small cut at the base of your palm to make more room for the median nerve, easing the pressure within the carpal tunnel. The procedure is mostly done with local anesthesia.
- Most people get good and permanent relief of symptom from the surgery.
- Most people can return to normal activities in 2 weeks.

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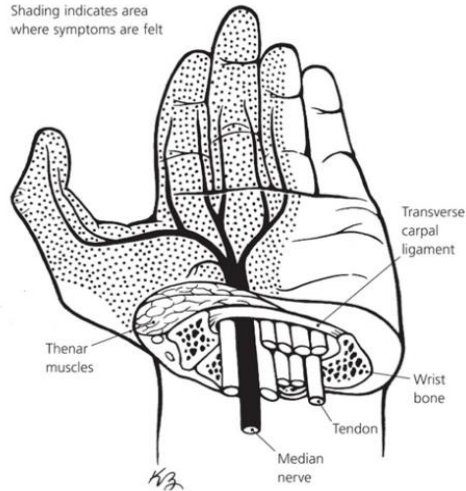


CARPAL TUNNEL SYNDROME

WHAT IS IT?

Carpal tunnel syndrome is a common, painful disorder of the hand. It happens when the median nerve, which runs through the wrist through carpal tunnel, gets squeezed under a ligament (transverse carpal ligament). This causes uncomfortable pins and needles sensation in the hand.

Shading indicates area where symptoms are felt



WHAT CAUSES IT?

- Happen because of increased pressure in the carpal tunnel that compresses on the median nerve.
- Most of the time, it happens without an identifiable cause. Certain conditions including diabetes, pregnancy, active thyroid conditions, wrist fractures, and various forms of arthritis increase the occurrence of carpal tunnel syndrome.
- Over time, repeated forceful hand movements can increase your risk of carpal tunnel syndrome, such as in people who work in food processing and packaging, typing, construction work.

WHAT ARE THE SYMPTOMS?

- Pain, numbness, or tingling sensation in your wrist and hand, mostly in the middle finger, index finger, and thumb. You may also notice decreased fine motor control of the affected fingers.
- The symptoms are usually worse at night and when you use your wrists and hands a lot.
- It can affect one or both hands.
- In more serious cases, you may notice that over time your grip strength gets weaker and you tend to drop heavy objects.

HOW IS IT DIAGNOSED?

The diagnosis is made with combination of assessment including:

- Doctors taking history from you about the symptoms and progression.
- Certain clinical tests carried out.
- Nerve conduction study-where small metal wires are placed on your skin to test how your nerves react to electrical stimulation to assess how bad the nerve compression is.

HOW IS IT TREATED?

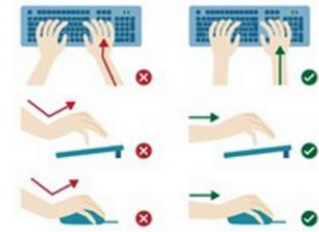
There are few treatment options available, based on the severity of your symptom:

(1) Physiotherapy:

a) Ergonomic advice:

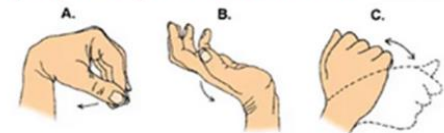
- Identify and avoid repeating the same hand and wrist movements that trigger it.
- Ensure correct hand and wrist position while doing prolonged activities.

HOW IS IT TREATED? (cont...)



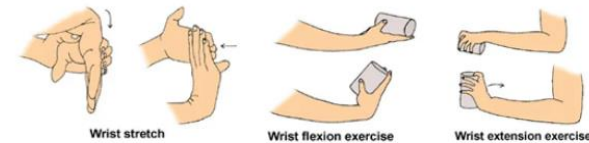
b) Carpal tunnel Syndrome exercises:

(b-i) Range of Movement:



Active range of motion

(i) Wrist Circles: Hand rotated in one direction, then rotated in opposite direction.



(ii) Wrist Stretch: The hand is flexed forward and extended back. You can incorporate weight to progress with this exercise.

(b-ii) Gliding:



Tendon glides

With your wrist straight, fully straighten all your fingers. Then bend the tips of your fingers into the "hook" position. Lastly make a tight fist with your thumb over your fingers.

(b-iii) Grip Strengthening:



Grip strengthening

Hold a squeezable ball in your palm, squeeze it gently and relax it.

Note: The exercises can start with 3 sets of 10 reps, 3 times daily, within comfortable range.