

CARPAL TUNNEL SYNDROME

Understanding Carpal Tunnel Syndrome Symptoms include tingling and numbness in the hand and wrist and sometimes presents as pain in the shoulder.

Symptoms The most common symptoms of carpal tunnel syndrome are tingling and numbness. Other symptoms include pain and/or weakened grip. In addition to occurring during your daily routine, symptoms can wake you at night.

Working with Your Doctor Your physician will work with you to make a treatment plan that is right for you. Your physician can help you learn more about symptom relief and surgery. Surgery is done on an outpatient basis.

The Carpal Tunnel A narrow space in the wrist that is surrounded by bone and ligament. In a healthy wrist, the median nerve is not compressed in the carpal tunnel. In a diseased wrist, the swollen tendons place pressure on the median nerve.

Tests You May Have To confirm carpal tunnel syndrome and rule out other problems, your physician may order tests.

Treatment Includes:

- **Taking Medication** Aspirin or ibuprofen can help reduce pain and swelling. Depending on the relief from the over-the-counter medication, your physician may prescribe an anti-inflammatory medication.
- **Steroid Injection** Your physician may recommend a steroid injection to reduce inflammation. Steroids are a strong medication that helps reduce pain and swelling. These Steroids are not the type used illegally by some athletes
- **Wearing a Splint** Your physician may recommend a wrist splint to reduce pressure on the median nerve by holding the wrist in a neutral position. The wrist may be worn at bedtime and/or during the day.
- **Hand Therapy** Your physician may refer you to an occupational therapist or physical therapist for treatment.
- **Surgery** Your physician may recommend surgery to relieve pressure on the median nerve. The surgical procedure often takes less than 20 minutes.

Possible Risks with Surgery

- Damage to nerves or blood vessels
- Unrelieved symptoms
- Infection