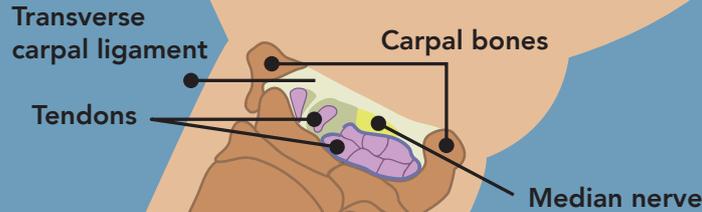


GRIP

SAFETY FOR EVERYONE



UNUSUAL NUMBNESS IN YOU HANDS? LEARN ABOUT PREVENTING CTS!

WHAT IS CTS?

Carpal tunnel syndrome (CTS) is a medical condition which causes tingling, numbness and pain in your hand and fingers. This is due to compression of the median nerve which travels through the wrists.

Causes

Carpel Tunnel syndrome is mainly caused by:

- Repetitive motions: typing, using a mouse, or any motions of the wrist that you do over and over. The risk of CTS especially increases when your hands are positioned lower than your wrists, during activities.

Other causes include conditions like hypothyroidism, obesity, rheumatoid arthritis and diabetes.

What Happens in Severe Cases?

As carpal tunnel syndrome becomes more severe, you may have less grip strength because the muscles in your hands tend to shrink. Pain and muscle cramping will also become worse. The median nerve will begin to lose function because of the irritation or pressure around it. This leads to:

- Slower nerve impulses
- Loss of feeling in the fingers
- A loss of strength and coordination, especially the ability to use your thumb to pinch

You could end up with permanent muscle damage and lose complete function in your hands.

TIPS: What Can you Do to Help?

Start making lifestyle changes. If your symptoms are due to repetitive motion, there are several steps that you can take to minimize the symptoms. These include:

- Correctly align your hands and wrists while working (Keep your wrists straight).
- Avoid flexing and extending your wrists repeatedly.
- Talk to your doctor about strengthening exercises or stretches that may help.
- Try to arrange your workspace in a way that minimizes discomfort (contact facilities).
- Take more frequent breaks or do a bit less of the activity that causes you pain (e.g. make a phone call instead of sending an email).

Further Treatment:

Immobilization: Your doctor may have you use a splint to keep your wrists from moving. The splint will help to lessen the pressure on the nerves and get rid of the numbness or tingling, by giving your median nerve a rest.

Medication: Your doctor may prescribe anti-inflammatory medication or steroid shots to reduce swelling.

Surgery: If none of the above treatments work, an operation may be an option. Talk to your doctor about it.

DAMEN