

FAST FACTS: Carpal Tunnel Syndrome

Carpal Tunnel Syndrome is a common condition of the hand that is caused by squeezing of the median nerve. The median nerve runs from the forearm into the hand through an opening in the wrist known as the carpal tunnel. The median nerve provides motor function and sensation to the thumb and three middle fingers. Women are three times more likely to experience this condition. Carpal Tunnel Syndrome is a progressive condition which can become worse without treatment.

✓ Symptoms of Carpal Tunnel Syndrome

- Numbness- especially at night
- Tingling in fingers
- Pain in hand or fingers
- Fingers swollen or useless
- Weakness which may make it difficult to grasp items

✓ Causes of Carpal Tunnel Syndrome

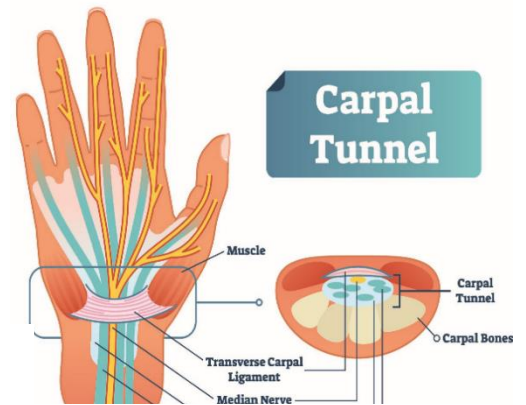
- Anatomical differences- some individuals have smaller carpal tunnels, which may be hereditary.
- Women, on average, have smaller carpal tunnels than men.
- Structures in the hand/wrist can change shape over time due to other causes such as trauma to the wrist or osteoarthritis in the area.
- Repetitive movements (i.e., computer entry, etc.).

✓ Treatment May Include:

- Splinting of the wrist.
- Medications- anti-inflammatory medications (including either oral or injected into the carpal tunnel space).
- Adaptions to repetitive activities (i.e., changing position at computer keyboard, etc.).
- Surgery to remove tissue that is pressing on the median nerve.

✓ What Else You Should Do

- Write down and share information about your family member's pain prior to and following any treatment with their primary healthcare team.
- Use a [Pain Diary](#) to note important information useful to your family member's healthcare providers.



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Resources

Johns Hopkins Medicine (2023). *Carpal Tunnel Syndrome*.

<https://www.hopkinsmedicine.org/health/conditions-and-diseases/carpal-tunnel-syndrome>.

National Institute of neurological Disorders and Stroke (NINRS) (2023). *Carpal Tunnel Syndrome*.

[https://www.ninds.nih.gov/health-information/disorders/carpal-tunnel-syndrome#:~:text=Carpal%20tunnel%20syndrome%20\(CTS\)%20is,may%20become%20swollen%20and%20useless](https://www.ninds.nih.gov/health-information/disorders/carpal-tunnel-syndrome#:~:text=Carpal%20tunnel%20syndrome%20(CTS)%20is,may%20become%20swollen%20and%20useless).