

Carpal Tunnel Syndrome

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Carpal Tunnel Syndrome (CTS) is a condition of the wrist that causes pain, tingling, numbness and weakness in the fingers and thumb. The most common cause of CTS is swelling or inflammation around the tendon and nerves, which increases pressure within the carpal tunnel. These conditions are caused by pressure on the median nerve. In the wrist, the median nerve and several tendons, which allow the fingers and thumb to bend, pass through the carpal tunnel. The tunnel is created by the carpal (wrist) bones and other tissue. Placing constant pressure on these tendons and nerves causes increased swelling and inflammation within the carpal tunnel.

Most Common Symptoms of CTS:

- ✓ Tingling in the entire hand.
- ✓ Pain that shoots from the hand up the arm as far as the shoulder.
- ✓ Swelling in the fingers.

You may notice that the pain in your hands are worse at night, and feel weak in the morning. You may have difficulty grasping or pinching objects. At first these symptoms may come and go, usually affected by excessive use of hands. At rest you may feel no symptoms. As your condition worsens, and you place more pressure on the nerve, you will experience numbness all of the time.

CTS Related Causes:

Jobs that require highly repetitive wrist or finger motions in combination with forceful pinching or gripping activities involving vibrating hand tools or any instrument that puts excessive pressure at the base of the palm often lead to CTS.

If symptoms increase at your daily work, adjust your work activities by resting your wrists and hands often. Alternate work tasks and modify workstations to help decrease hand pressure. Reduce the amount of time spent at particular tasks. Wrist splints are worn to keep wrists straight and decrease the amount of pressure on the nerve and help reduce swelling. The goals of treatment are to relieve pain and prevent CTS from getting worse. CTS can begin suddenly or gradually. If not treated early it can lead to permanent nerve and muscle damage. With early diagnosis and proper treatment, there is an excellent chance of complete recovery.