

Carpal Tunnel Syndrome

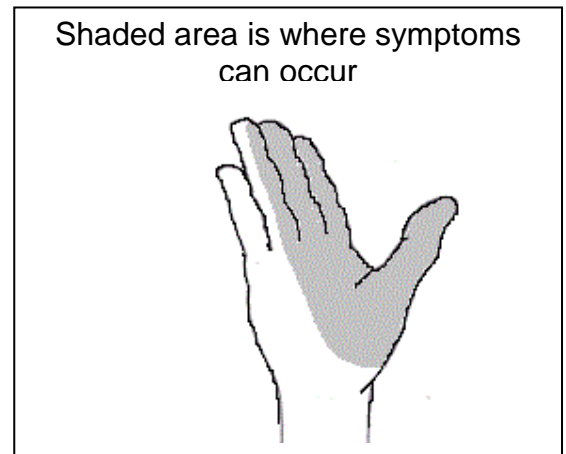
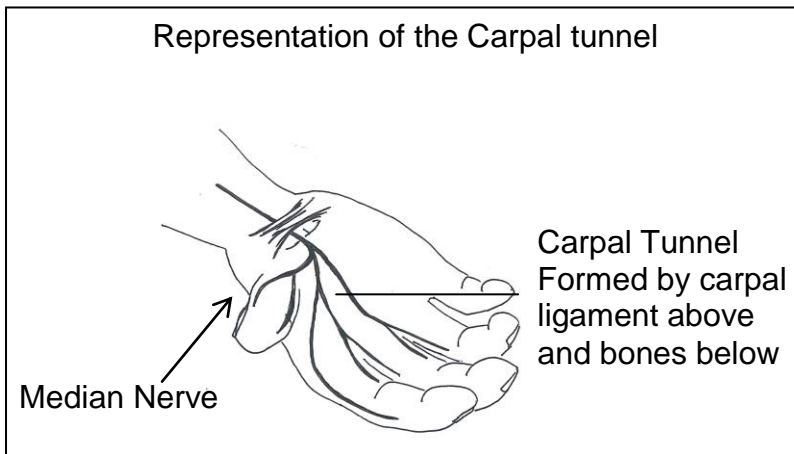
This leaflet offers more information about carpal tunnel syndrome. If you have any further questions or concerns, please speak to the staff member in charge of your care.

What is carpal tunnel syndrome?

The carpal tunnel is a narrow passage in your wrist made up of small bones which lie below a tough band of tissue above.

One of the nerves (the median nerve) that control the feeling and movement in the hand runs through the carpal tunnel.

Carpal tunnel syndrome (CTS) occurs when the nerve is squashed within the carpal tunnel.



What are the signs and symptoms?

CTS is a common condition that can cause pain, numbness and a tingling sensation in the hand, first (index), middle and ring finger. Sometimes the thumb can also feel weak.

Symptoms usually develop gradually, starting at night.

Do I need any tests to confirm the diagnosis?

Sometimes a nerve conduction test is completed to find out the severity of the condition.

What treatments are available?

In some cases the symptoms of CTS will resolve without treatment.

Non-surgical treatments such as wrist splints or corticosteroid injections can be used to treat mild or moderate symptoms.

In more severe cases of CTS surgery may be required to reduce the pressure on the median nerve.

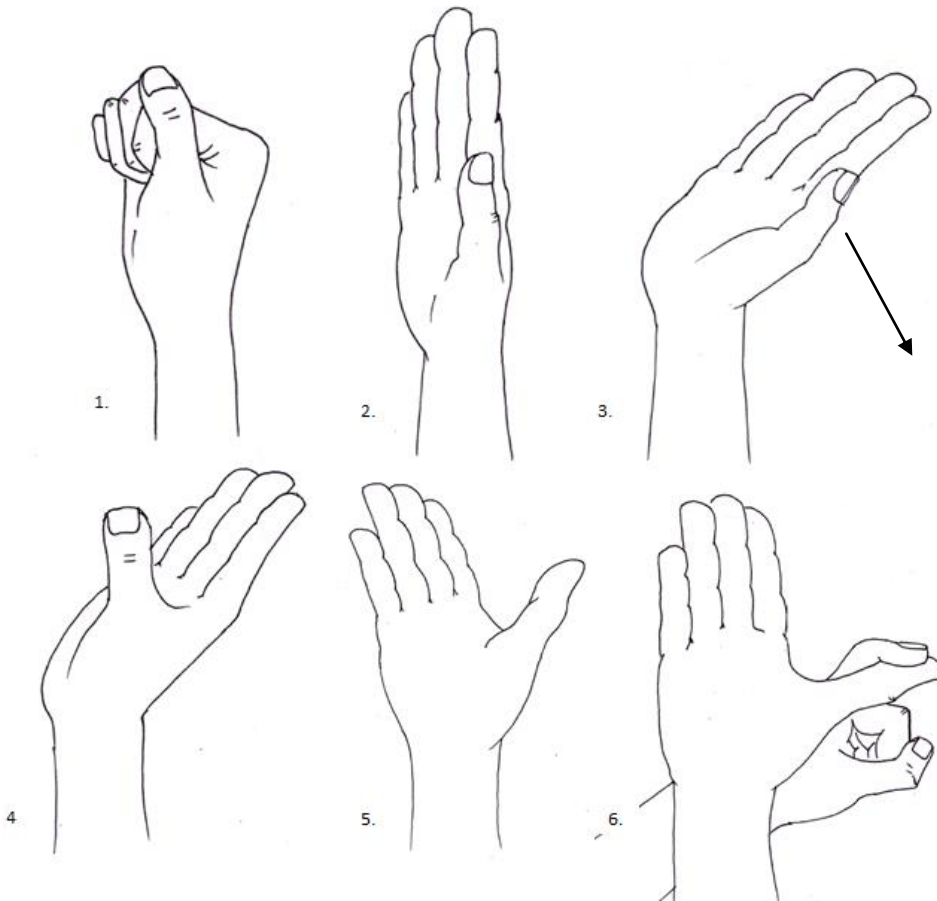
Splinting

Your therapist may provide you with a splint. The purpose of this splint is to prevent you from bending or straightening your wrist as this makes the carpal tunnel smaller which can bring on symptoms. The splint should be worn as follows:



Exercises

It is important you do these exercises as prescribed by your therapist. They can help your symptoms by moving first the nerve within the tunnel and then the tendons within the tunnel. This can help reduce fluid, scarring and improve fluid return within the nerve.

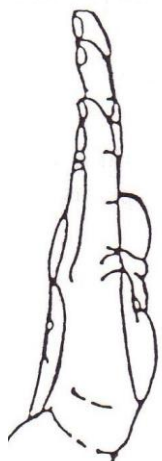


1. Start with your hand in a fist, wrist neutral / straight
2. Then straighten your fingers keeping your thumb at the side of your hand
3. Move your wrist backwards
4. Now extend your thumb away from your hand
5. Turn your hand so the front of the wrist faces you
6. If this hasn't caused any tingling then stretch your thumb downwards

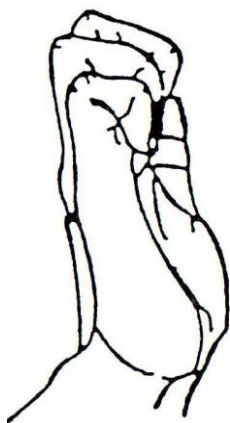
Go through the above sequence _____ times
_____ times during the day.

* Stop doing the exercises if they make your symptoms worse and/or your symptoms do not settle.

Further Exercises



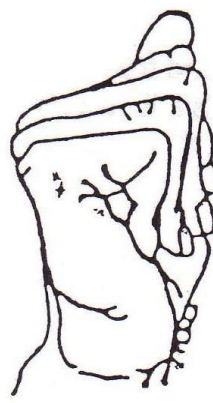
Straight



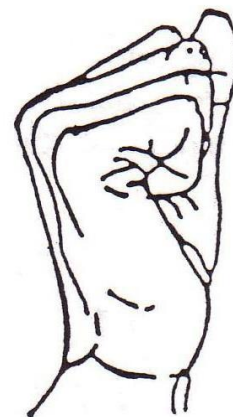
Hook



Table



Flat Fist



Full Fist

Go through the above sequence _____ times
_____ times during the day.

* Discontinue the exercises if they provoke your symptoms and/or your symptoms do not settle.

Other Instructions or Advice

Therapist _____

Useful sources of information

Versus Arthritis
British Society for Surgery of the Hand
NHS Choices

www.versusarthritis.org/
www.bssh.ac.uk
www.nhs.uk

Contact us

If you have any questions or concerns about regarding your splint or exercises, please talk to your therapist at your next appointment. If your concerns are more urgent, you can contact the hand therapy team on 020 8725 1038.

For more information leaflets on conditions, procedures, treatments and services offered at our hospitals, please visit www.stgeorges.nhs.uk

Additional services

Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)

PALS can offer you on-the-spot advice and information when you have comments or concerns about our services or the care you have received. You can visit the PALS office between 9.30am and 4.30pm, Monday to Friday in the main corridor between Grosvenor and Lanesborough wings (near the lift foyer).

Tel: 020 8725 2453 **Email:** pals@stgeorges.nhs.uk

NHS Choices

NHS Choices provides online information and guidance on all aspects of health and healthcare, to help you make decisions about your health. **Web:** www.nhs.uk

NHS 111

You can call 111 when you need medical help fast but it's not a 999 emergency. NHS 111 is available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Calls are free from landlines and mobile phones. **Tel:** 111

AccessAble

You can download accessibility guides for all of our services by searching 'St George's Hospital' on the AccessAble website (www.accessable.co.uk).

The guides are designed to ensure everyone – including those with accessibility needs – can access our hospital and community sites with confidence.



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