

# Carpal Tunnel Syndrome Info Sheet

Carpal Tunnel Syndrome (CTS) is a hand condition that occurs when the median nerve is compressed at your wrist. This nerve controls the movement and feeling in your hand. The carpal tunnel is a narrow passageway in your wrist, formed by bones and ligaments. When the space in the tunnel becomes narrow, or the nerve becomes too large, the median nerve can become compressed, leading to symptoms.

## Symptoms

Common symptoms of CTS include:

- **Numbness or tingling** of the thumb, index, middle and half of the ring finger
- **Pain or discomfort** in the hand, wrist or arm
- **Weakness** in the hand, making it difficult to grip objects
- **Night-time symptoms** can often wake you from sleep

Symptoms often worsen over time if left untreated.

## Causes

Several factors can contribute to CTS:

- **Repetitive hand motions** such as typing or using tools
- **Wrist injuries** can cause or exacerbate symptoms
- **Pregnancy:** hormonal changes during pregnancy cause fluid retention leading to swelling in the wrist
- **Medical Conditions** such as diabetes and arthritis can increase the risk of CTS

## Treatment Options

Treatment for CTS depends on the severity of your symptoms. Some options include:

- **Rest** by avoiding activities that flare-up your symptoms
- **Splinting** of your wrist may reduce symptoms
- **Pain-relievers** from over the counter
- **Corticosteroid injections** into the carpal tunnel can reduce inflammation
- **Surgery:** in cases that aren't improving or are severe than surgery is recommended to release pressure on the median nerve.

## When to Refer

- After progression of symptoms following non-operative measures
- Diagnostic uncertainty
- For additional management and support
- At patient request



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