

Fast Facts

Carpal Tunnel

- When median nerve, which runs from your forearm through your wrist to your hand, gets compressed
- Main function of the median nerve is to provide sensation to the palm of your hand, thumb and fingers (not your little finger) and send signals to move your thumb
 - Anything that irritates the median nerve can cause carpal tunnel
- Increased risk for developing it if you are female because the space the median nerve travels through in your wrist is naturally smaller, anything that alters the space like breaking or dislocating your wrist, nerve damage from chronic conditions, inflammatory illness like arthritis, being obese and doing repetitive/prolonged motions that require flexing of the wrist

| <i>Symptoms</i> | <i>Treatment</i> | <i>Prevention</i> |
|---|--|--|
| <p><u>Mild:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Starts gradually -Intermittent numbness/tingling to your thumb, index, middle and ring fingers with pain in your wrist/palm of your hand -Pain can feel like an electric shock <p><u>Severe:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Pain travels up your arm -Occurs all the time -Weakness in hand causing you to drop things | <p><u>Goal:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Start treatment as early as possible <p><u>Mild:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Take frequent breaks from repetitive motions -Avoid activities that increase symptoms -Rotate your wrists and stretch your palms and fingers -Apply ice packs -Splint wrists, especially at night -Lose weight -Take over-the-counter nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs), like ibuprofen, -Corticosteroid injections <p><u>Severe:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Carpal tunnel release surgery | <p>Minimize the stress placed on your hands and wrists</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Take frequent breaks from activities that require you to keep your wrists bent for extended periods of time -Avoid bending your wrists all the way in one direction or the other -Learn proper hand positioning for any task -Reduce the force you apply and relax your grip when performing tasks -Maintain good posture -Keep wrists and hands warm |

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