

Carpal Tunnel Syndrome:

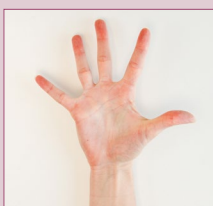
EXERCISES

There are many factors that can cause carpal tunnel syndrome (CTS). Because of this there is no single way to prevent it. But the exercises in this handout can help you protect your wrists. They can help you strengthen and stretch your fingers, hands, wrists, and forearms. To help reduce your symptoms or your risk of developing CTS, do these exercises regularly. Aim to do them once an hour any time you are doing activities with your hands. Before you start, make sure to talk about these exercises with your health care practitioner to ensure these exercises are safe for you to do.



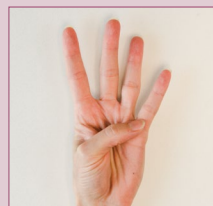
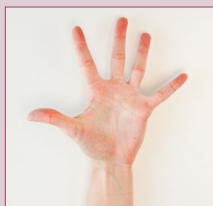
Fingers and Hand

Exercise 1 – Tight Fist / Open Hand



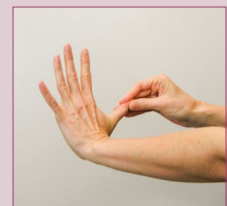
- Clench the fingers of one hand into a tight fist.
- Let go, opening your hand and spreading your fingers wide.
- Repeat 5 times.
- Repeat with your other hand.

Exercise 2 – Thumb Across Palm



- Hold one hand so your open palm is facing up. Spread your fingers apart.
- Move your thumb across your palm so it touches just below your little finger. Hold for 5 seconds.
- Return your thumb to its starting position. Spread your fingers apart wide. Hold for 5 seconds.
- Repeat 5 to 10 times with each hand.

Exercise 3 – Thumb Stretch



- Hold one arm up straight out in front of you with your palm facing away from your body.
- Grip the top of your thumb with your opposite hand. Gently stretch it out and back. Hold for 5 seconds.
- Repeat 5 to 10 times with each hand.

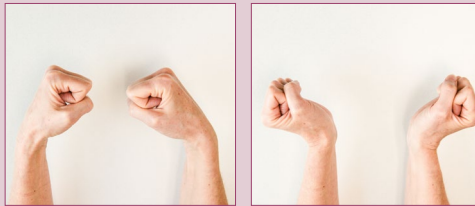
Wrists

Exercise 1 – Forearm Flexors Stretch



- Hold one arm up straight out in front of you at shoulder height. Place your fingers together and hold your hand so your palm faces outward.
- With your other hand, gently pull the fingers and hand of your outstretched arm back toward your body. Hold for 5 seconds. Keep your elbow straight.
- While still gently bending your hand back, spread your fingers and thumb of your outstretched hand. Hold for 5 seconds.
- Repeat 5 times with each hand.

Exercise 2 – Wrist Rotations



- Hold one or both hands in a loose fist. Rotate each wrist 5 times in a slow clockwise circle.
- Reverse direction and rotate 5 times in a counterclockwise circle.
- Repeat with your other hand, if you are using one hand at a time.

What else can you do?

Studies have shown yoga can be helpful for people with carpal tunnel syndrome. Make sure to talk about your interest in yoga with your health care practitioner. He or she can let you know if there are certain postures you should avoid. And talk with the yoga instructors before class. Let them know about your CTS and any other health conditions you may have. They will be able to modify postures to be safe for you.

Correct posture and rest breaks can help lessen the negative effects of CTS. Take breaks during work and while doing hobbies or chores at home. And learn proper posture for all the activities you do. If your company offers it, ask for an ergonomic evaluation of your work area. Then follow the recommendations both at work and at home.

Ask your health care practitioner if there are any tests, referrals, or treatments that might be helpful to use along with your current treatment plan. Other treatment options may include the following: chiropractic services, physical therapy, acupuncture, massage therapy, medicines, and other services (such as occupational therapy).

