

Carpal Tunnel Syndrome:



TIPS TO HELP RELIEVE PAIN

If you have symptoms of carpal tunnel syndrome, there are things you can do that may help relieve your symptoms or prevent them from getting worse. Try these tips:

- **Rest your wrists.** If at all possible, take a break for as many days as you can from your usual activities or those activities that increase pain. Try to avoid repetitive movements and gripping/carrying things. Use the opposite hand if you can.
 - **Try a wrist splint.** Wearing a splint on your wrist can take pressure off the nerve and may help relieve your symptoms. The splint holds your wrist in a neutral position. This prevents the wrist from bending but still allows you to use your hand. Splints are most often worn at night, when symptoms tend to be worst. But they can also be worn during the day. Talk with your health care practitioner about the different types of splints and if wearing one would benefit you.
 - **Give your wrists frequent breaks.** Take frequent, short breaks from any tasks that require the same hand motions over and over. Ask your health care practitioner for wrist exercises and stretches that may be helpful for you.
 - **Avoid or modify activities that cause you pain.** If certain activities are making your symptoms worse, stop what you're doing or change how you're doing it. Job tasks may be challenging to stop. But you may be able to set up your equipment or alternate tasks in ways that put less stress on your wrists. Here are a few ideas:
 - > Use less force when you type or do other tasks.
 - > Relax your grip on pens or tools.
 - > If possible, avoid bending or twisting your wrists when you use your hands. Especially avoid curling your wrists forward or bending them back for long periods.
 - > Try using the other hand to do the task.
 - > Alternate tasks.
 - > Ask for a work station ergonomic evaluation if your employer offers it.
 - **Try a moist cold pack.** This may be helpful in cases where the tendons in your wrist are swollen. Cold helps reduce swelling.
 - **Try an anti-inflammatory pain reliever.** A pain reliever such as ibuprofen or naproxen may help relieve mild pain. It may also decrease inflammation in the carpal tunnel. Your doctor can tell you which anti-inflammatory medicine would be best for you.
 - **Try these tips for pain relief at night:**
 - > Support your arm with pillows. Make sure your wrist is in a neutral position (not curled or bent back).
 - > Wear a wrist splint while you sleep if your health care practitioner recommends it.
 - > Don't sleep on your hands. This can increase numbness and pain.
- If your symptoms don't get better after a couple of weeks of rest and self-care, see your health care practitioner. This is especially important if your symptoms make it hard to sleep or do daily tasks. Don't wait until the pain gets severe. There are effective treatments that can help relieve your symptoms and prevent long-term damage to your nerve. 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).