



Carpal tunnel syndrome

Carpal tunnel syndrome (CTS) is a common hand and wrist condition that causes numbness, tingling, and weakness. It occurs when the median nerve, responsible for feeling and movement in these areas, is compressed within the carpal tunnel, a narrow passageway in your wrist.



FACTORS THAT CAN CONTRIBUTE TO CTS

- Activities that involve repetitive gripping, bending, or twisting of the wrist can irritate the tendons and put pressure on the median nerve. Examples include typing, using a computer mouse, or playing specific instruments.
- Some people are naturally predisposed due to a smaller carpal tunnel or thicker tendons.
- CTS can be associated with underlying health issues like diabetes, obesity, rheumatoid arthritis, and pregnancy.
- Fractures or sprains can also contribute to CTS by causing inflammation and swelling in the carpal tunnel.

SYMPTOMS

- Numbness, tingling, or burning sensation in the thumb, index, middle, and half of the ring finger. This often occurs at night or during sleep.
- Weakness in the hand, making it difficult to grasp or hold objects
- Pain or a dull ache in the wrist or palm
- Difficulty coordinating fine motor skills like buttoning clothes or writing



TREATMENT

- Consult your doctor for a proper diagnosis and treatment plan to manage carpal tunnel syndrome. Treatment options vary depending on the severity and may include:
- Avoiding activities that aggravate symptoms. Wrist braces can also help immobilize the wrist and reduce pressure on the nerve.
 - Over-the-counter pain relievers like ibuprofen can help reduce inflammation and pain.
 - Corticosteroid injections can provide relief by reducing inflammation around the median nerve.
 - In severe cases, surgery may be necessary to create more space for the median nerve in the carpal tunnel.

PREVENTION

- While not always preventable, some practices can help reduce your risk of CTS:
- Maintain good posture. Keep your wrists straight while working at a desk or using electronic devices.
 - Take frequent breaks. Stretch your hands and wrists regularly to improve circulation and prevent stiffness.
 - Strengthen hand and forearm muscles. This can help support your wrists and reduce strain.
 - Maintain a healthy weight. Excess weight can contribute to CTS by putting extra pressure on the median nerve.