

Wrist/ Hand Pain: Carpal Tunnel Syndrome

What is it?:

The carpal tunnel is a narrow space inside the wrist where a nerve called the median nerve passes through. Carpal tunnel syndrome (CTS) occurs when the nerve gets pinched because of swelling or repeated wrist motions.

What are symptoms associated with it?:

Someone with CTS may have numbness, tingling, weakness, or pain in the thumb, fingers, and hand.

Management:

- Cut down on activities that increase your pain.
- Take repeated breaks to rest and stretch.
- Avoid repeatedly bending or twisting your wrist.
- Put an ice pack on your wrist for 10 minutes at a time to help with pain and swelling.
- Wear a wrist brace as directed by your doctor or occupational therapist.
- Medicine can also help with pain and swelling. If prescribed by your doctor, take it as instructed.
- If needed, occupational therapy can help manage and improve symptoms.

Wrist/ Hand Pain: Carpal Tunnel Syndrome

Exercises:

Note: When you no longer have pain or numbness, you can do exercises to help prevent carpal tunnel syndrome from coming back. Stop any stretch or movement that causes pain.

Prayer Stretch

1. Start by pressing your palms against each other just below your chin.
2. Slowly lower your hands toward your waistline, keeping the heels of your hands together and close to your stomach.
3. Hold for at least 15 to 30 seconds. Repeat 2 to 4 times.



Wrist Flexor Stretch

1. Extend your arm in front of you with your palm facing out.
2. Bend your wrist, pointing your hand towards you.
3. With your other hand, gently bend your wrist farther until you feel a mild to moderate stretch in your forearm.
4. Hold for at least 15 to 30 seconds. Repeat 2 to 4 times.



Wrist Extensor Stretch

Repeat steps 1 through 4 of the stretch above, but begin with your extended hand palm down.

