

## Carpal Tunnel Syndrome

### What is carpal tunnel syndrome?

Carpal tunnel syndrome is numbness and tingling of the fingers, mostly the thumb, pointer, and long fingers. The tingling is due to nerve compression at the wrist.

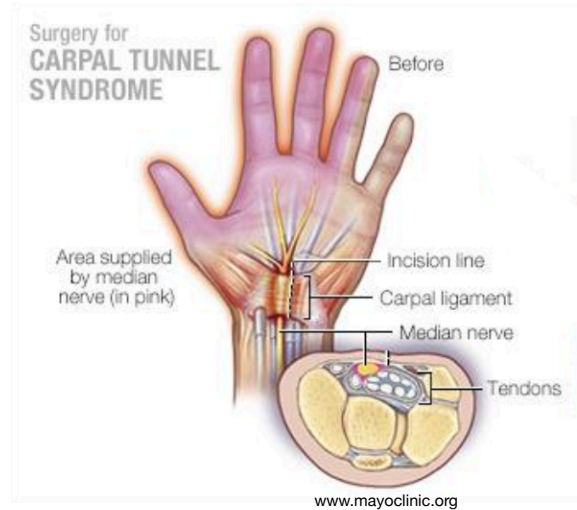
### What causes carpal tunnel syndrome?

Carpal tunnel syndrome occurs when the median nerve gets compressed (pinched) through the carpal tunnel at the wrist.

### How is carpal tunnel diagnosed?

Carpal tunnel is diagnosed with a physical exam and a nerve conduction study. The nerve conduction study evaluates the severity and exact location of the nerve compression.

### How is carpal tunnel treated?



|              |                          |  |
|--------------|--------------------------|--|
| Non-Surgical | Observation              | - Sometimes numbness and tingling of the fingers is intermittent and the symptoms are not severe or bothersome enough to need additional treatment   |
|              | Splinting                | - Nighttime splinting of the wrist can take pressure off of the nerve and alleviate the numbness and tingling  |
|              | Corticosteroid Injection | - A corticosteroid injection can direct strong anti-inflammatory medication directly at the carpal tunnel to decrease the inflammation around the nerve.   |
| Surgery      | Carpal Tunnel Release    | - This is an outpatient procedure that takes pressure off of the nerve. There is a small incision on the palm and the tunnel that is compressing the nerve is opened up thus taking the pressure on the nerve. |

### What is recovery after surgery?

- After surgery, patients are kept in a splint dressing until the follow up appointment.
- You are encouraged to wiggle your fingers and squeeze a full fist as much as possible after surgery to help with pain and swelling.
- Stitches are removed at the follow up appointment in 10-14 days.
- The burning, aching sensation that wakes you up at night should be gone soon after surgery. Nerve recovery can take up to 18 months.
- The incision may be sore for about 3 months after surgery.