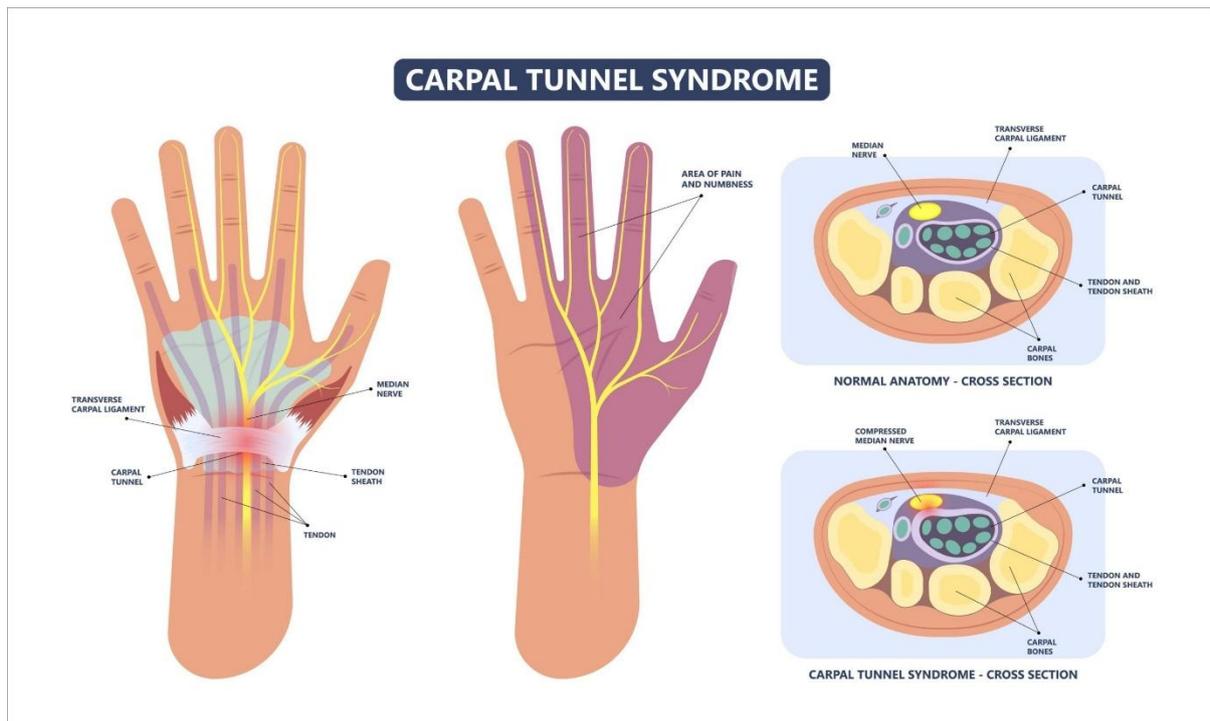


## Carpal Tunnel Syndrome



### What is Carpal Tunnel Syndrome?

Carpal Tunnel Syndrome (CTS) is a condition caused by **pressure on the median nerve** at the wrist. This nerve passes through a narrow space called the **carpal tunnel**, along with tendons that help move your fingers.

When the nerve becomes compressed, it can cause pain, tingling, numbness, and weakness in the hand.

### What Causes Carpal Tunnel Syndrome?

CTS can develop due to:

- Repetitive hand or wrist movements

- Prolonged gripping or typing
- Wrist positions that bend for long periods
- Swelling in the wrist
- Pregnancy
- Conditions such as diabetes, arthritis, or thyroid problems
- Previous wrist injury

Sometimes, no clear cause is identified.

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## Common Symptoms

You may notice:

- Tingling or numbness in the thumb, index, middle, and part of the ring finger
- Pain in the wrist or hand, sometimes spreading to the forearm
- Symptoms worse at night or on waking
- Weakness or clumsiness of the hand
- Difficulty gripping objects or dropping things

Shaking the hand may temporarily relieve symptoms.

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## How is Carpal Tunnel Syndrome Diagnosed?

Diagnosis is usually based on:

- Your symptoms and medical history
- Physical examination of the hand and wrist

Nerve conduction studies or ultrasound may be used if the diagnosis is unclear or symptoms are severe.

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## Treatment and Management

Many people improve with **conservative (non-surgical) treatment**, especially if treated early.

### 1. Activity Modification

- Reduce repetitive hand and wrist activities

- Take regular breaks from typing or manual tasks
- Avoid prolonged wrist bending

## 2. Wrist Splint

- A wrist splint worn at night keeps the wrist in a neutral position
- This often reduces night-time symptoms

## 3. Pain Relief

- Simple pain relief such as paracetamol
- Anti-inflammatory medication may help (if suitable)

## 4. Physiotherapy

Physiotherapy may include:

- Advice on posture and ergonomics
- Gentle nerve and tendon-gliding exercises
- Strengthening and stretching exercises

## 5. Corticosteroid Injection

- May reduce inflammation and nerve pressure
- Can provide temporary or long-term symptom relief

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## Surgery

Surgery may be considered if:

- Symptoms are severe or worsening
- There is persistent numbness or weakness
- Conservative treatments have not helped

Surgery aims to **release pressure on the median nerve** and is usually very effective.

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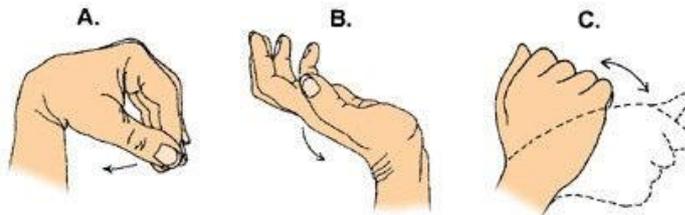
## Exercises

Your physiotherapist may advise:

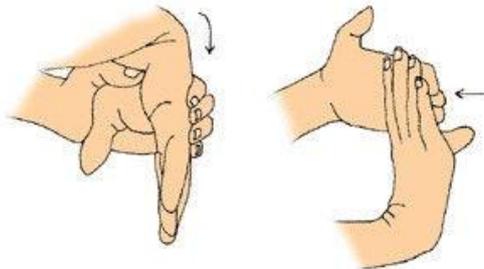
- Nerve-gliding exercises
- Gentle wrist and finger stretches

Exercises should not increase pain or numbness.

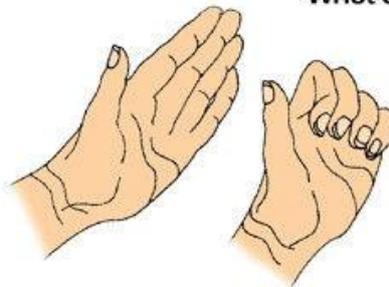
## Carpal Tunnel Syndrome Exercises



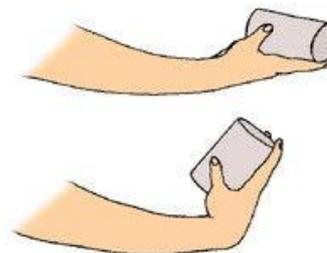
Active range of motion



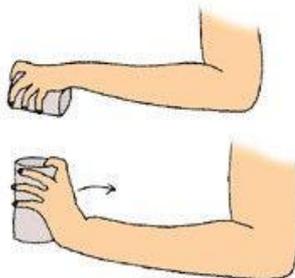
Wrist stretch



Tendon glides



Wrist flexion exercise



Wrist extension exercise



Grip strengthening

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### How Long Does It Take to Improve?

- Mild cases may improve within **weeks to months**
- Recovery depends on symptom severity and duration
- Early treatment gives the best results

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### When Should I Seek Urgent Advice?

Contact a healthcare professional if:

- Numbness is constant
- Hand weakness is worsening
- You are dropping objects frequently
- Symptoms are not improving after treatment

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### Self-Management Tips

- Keep wrists in a neutral position
- Use ergonomic equipment at work
- Take frequent breaks
- Maintain good posture
- Continue exercises as advised

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### Key Message

Carpal Tunnel Syndrome is common and **often treatable without surgery**, especially when managed early.