

# Carpal Tunnel Syndrome (CTS)

## Patient Information

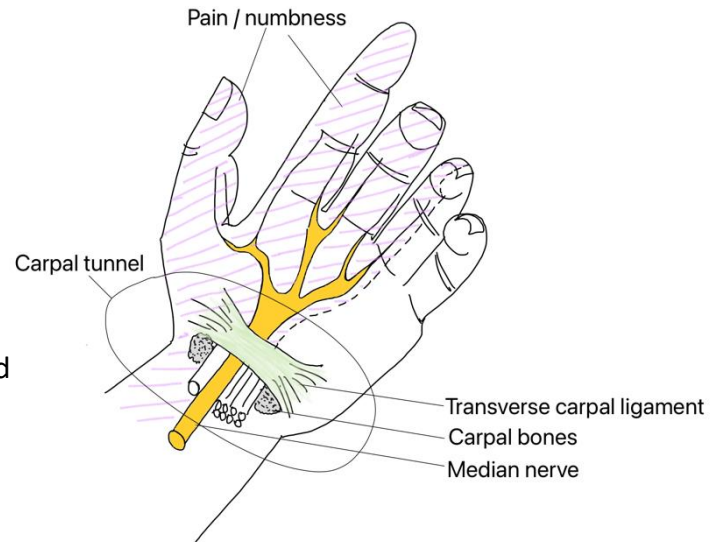
### What is it?

Carpal tunnel syndrome is pressure on the median nerve in your wrist.

### What causes Carpal Tunnel Syndrome?

You are more at risk if you are:

- overweight
- pregnant
- do work or hobbies where you repeatedly bend your wrist or grip hard
- have another illness, like arthritis or diabetes
- have a family member with CTS
- have previously injured your wrist



### You may have some of the following signs and symptoms:

- Pins and needles/ tingling sensations in the thumb, index and middle fingers.
- An ache or pain in your fingers or hand, sometimes going up the arm.
- Numbness in the thumb, fingers or palm.
- A weak thumb or difficulty gripping or tendency to drop things.

**Treatment:** *CTS sometimes gets better by itself in a few months.*

- **Splint:** Wear a wrist splint to keep your wrist straight. It can be bought from pharmacies or online. The splint should be worn at night, while you sleep, for at least 4 weeks.
- **Activity:** Stop or cut down on activities that may be causing you to frequently bend your wrist or grip hard for extended periods of time (e.g. using vibrating tools for work or playing an instrument).
- **Hand therapy:** if your symptoms are not improving with above advice, you may benefit from seeing a hand therapist for splinting, exercises and advice.
- **Injection** to the wrist, is a treatment option, if other treatment has not helped.
- **Surgery:** if your symptoms are not getting better with other treatments, you may need surgery. The surgery is usually done as a day case. Severe CTS may not completely go away after surgery, but surgery may prevent it from getting worse.