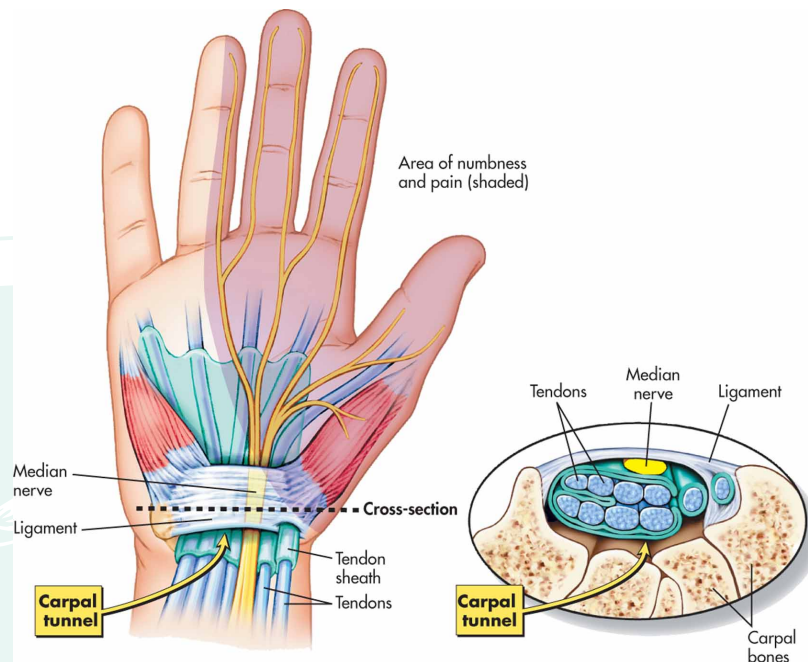


Carpal Tunnel Syndrome Surgery

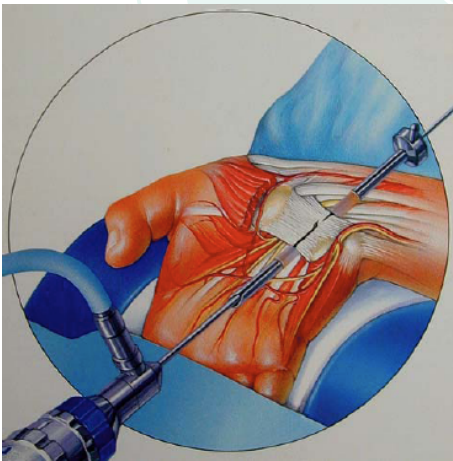
What is Carpal Tunnel?

The carpal tunnel is a small space in the palm of your hand. Carpal Tunnel Syndrome is caused by crushing of the median nerve. This causes pins and needles or a numb feeling in the thumb, index and middle fingers. This is usually worse at night, due to swelling of the tendons in your wrist. Hanging your hand down, may make it feel better for a while.

Your doctor may be able to diagnose carpal tunnel based on a few simple tests in the clinic, however sometimes nerve conduction studies are required.



Treatment Options:



Most patients respond well to wearing a splint at night, or a steroid injection into the carpal tunnel. If these techniques do not work, surgery may be your next step. It is important that any thyroid or hormone problems are treated prior to surgery, as they may cure carpal tunnel syndrome. Pregnancy is a can cause carpal tunnel syndrome & resolves after birth.

There are two ways of performing carpal tunnel surgery – *open* and *endoscopic*.

Both techniques cut the band that forms the roof of the carpal tunnel, thus releasing the pressure on the median nerve.

Endoscopic surgery uses a telescopic camera and smaller incisions.

You may choose to have your surgery under local anaesthetic.

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After your Operation:

You will have local anaesthetic around your incision sites, which will wear off within 12-24 hours. After this time, you should take your prescribed pain medication.

Please keep your hand elevated for the first 48 hours.

Your fingers will swell and become hard to move, it is important that you continue to try to move them. You can commence exercising your fingers immediately after surgery.



You may remove your bandage the day after your surgery, but leave the underlying adhesive dressing clean and dry. If they are soiled, you may purchase new ones from your local pharmacy. We will replace your dressings when we remove your stitches.

Carpal tunnel surgery is effective in 95% of cases. Recovery periods are very variable. Any loss of muscle at the base of the thumb, may never return. 10% of people notice persistent weakness in the hand after surgery.

The infection rate is very low, however wounds on the palm of the hand tend to heal irregularly and the edges can overlap. These areas will take longer to heal.

It is possible that a nerve can be cut or bruised by the surgery. This can cause numbness, which takes weeks to months to recover.

1% of patients develop regional pain syndrome after surgery, this is characterised by severe persistent pain, redness of the hand and severe swelling. This is very difficult to treat, and can last for 12-18 months.

Every effort is made to ensure your surgery is safe and effective.

Date: 9 August 2023

Sarah Coll.

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