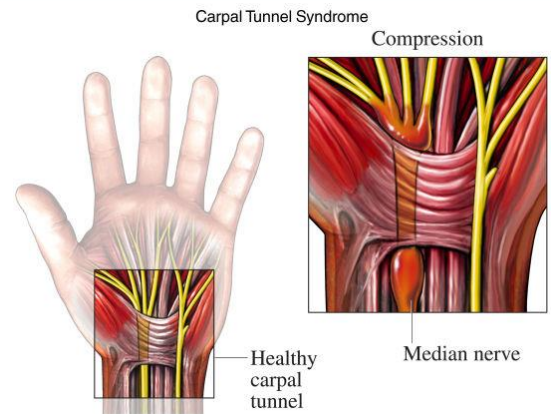


Carpal Tunnel Syndrome (CTS) is a common nerve issue caused by pinching of the median nerve in the hand. This can lead to numbness, tingling, pain and loss of strength and function in the palm of the hand and can involve the first to fourth fingers. CTS affects approximately 3 to 6 percent of adults in the general population. Some causes include trauma, repetitive maneuvers, certain diseases, and pregnancy but cannot always be determined (LeBlanc 2011).

People with CTS may find it difficult to use their hands for certain activities such as grasping and pinching. Symptoms can sometimes be worse at night interfering with sleep. It is important to be evaluated for CTS as issues can be permanent. Testing and treatments may depend on the severity and duration of your symptoms but often start with non-surgical treatments and treating any underlying condition.



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Non-Surgical Treatments

Immobilization

Bracing with one of the follow options is recommended during repetitive activities and at night.

- Splint
- Cock-up wrist brace
- Custom brace

Medications

Medications work directly to reduce acute pain, swelling and inflammation. They are usually used on a short-term basis.

- Non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs) – ibuprofen (Motrin, Advil) and Naprosyn (Aleve)
- Natural anti-inflammatory medications – ginger, turmeric, arnica, capsaicin, fish oil
- Acetaminophen
- Aspirin
- Gabapentin / pregabalin

Cortisone Injections

Steroid injections work like anti-inflammatory medications and are injected into the tunnel at the wrist containing the nerve. They are used sparingly for severe symptoms.

Testing

Your provider may recommend obtaining an electromyography (EMG)/nerve conduction velocity (NCV) but is not always necessary. This test involves passing an electrical impulse across the nerves in the arm to determine if and where the nerve is dysfunctional and to what extent.



Surgical Intervention

Surgery to release the band of tissue covering the nerve may be recommended if the nonsurgical treatments do not work or if symptoms are very severe. It is important to know that surgery may not completely resolve symptoms but rather to help with prevent them from worsening.

Questions

The CORE Institute is dedicated to your outcome. If any questions or concerns arise, please call The CORE Institute at 1.866.974.2673.

References

LeBlanc, K., Cestia, W. (2011). Carpal Tunnel Syndrome. *American Academy of Family Physicians*. 83(8):952-958.