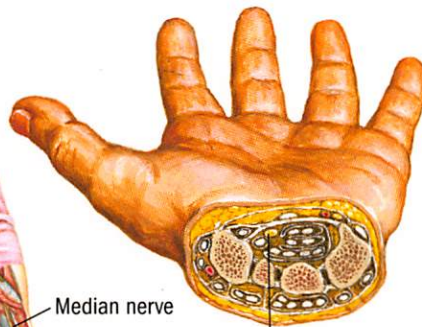
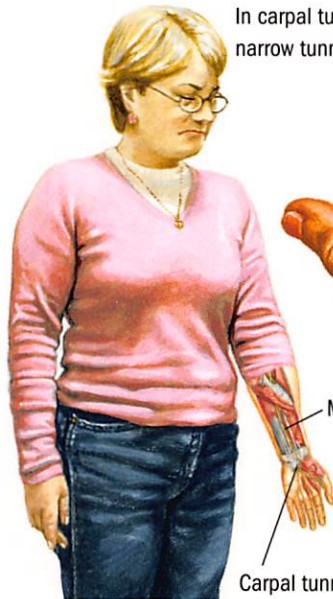


MANAGING YOUR CARPAL TUNNEL SYNDROME

In carpal tunnel syndrome, the wrist swells and the narrow tunnel squeezes the median nerve.



Median nerve in the carpal tunnel

Carpal tunnel

Gradual numbness of fingers while driving could be a problem.



Tingling and/or pain in the fingers may interfere with sleep.



Wrist position and motion may cause or worsen carpal tunnel syndrome.



Tests for carpal tunnel syndrome include:
 Bending the wrist (Phalen test),
 Tapping the wrist (Tinel sign), and
 Pressing the wrist to cause symptoms (tingling).

What Is Carpal Tunnel Syndrome?

Carpal tunnel syndrome (CTS) is an ailment affecting the wrist and hand. The nerve controlling feeling and movement in the wrist and hand involved in carpal tunnel syndrome is the median nerve. It lies in a passage in the wrist called the carpal tunnel.

What Causes Carpal Tunnel Syndrome?

In CTS, the tunnel becomes narrow because of swelling in the wrist. The smaller tunnel squeezes the median nerve, which causes pain and other symptoms.

Moving the hand and wrist repeatedly in the same way, such as typing, writing, and using a computer mouse, can cause CTS. Cashiers, butchers, and janitors have an increased risk of CTS. Pregnant women often get CTS because their hormones change and they retain fluid. Several illnesses, for example, muscle and bone disorders, underactive thyroid (hypothyroidism), and diabetes, can also increase risk of CTS.

What Are the Symptoms of Carpal Tunnel Syndrome?

In the wrist, hand, and fingers, CTS causes pain, tingling, numbness, and weak grip (a tendency to drop something). Symptoms often improve when the hand is wrung or shaken. Some people feel discomfort in the upper arm and shoulder.

Symptoms often worsen at night and can interfere with sleep.

How Is Carpal Tunnel Syndrome Diagnosed?

The doctor examines the wrist, and to cause symptoms, will tap it over the median nerve and will bend it and hold it there for a few seconds. Special tests (EMG) to check the wrist's nerves and muscles may also be done.