

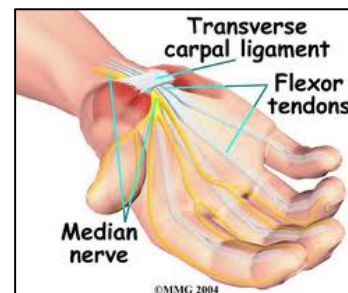


CARPAL TUNNEL SYNDROME



What is carpal tunnel syndrome?

Carpal tunnel syndrome is a condition in which there is pressure on the median nerve, which supplies feeling and movement to parts of the hand. The area in the wrist where the nerve enters the hand is called the carpal tunnel. This tunnel is normally narrow, so any swelling can pinch the nerve and cause pain, numbness, or weakness.



What causes carpal tunnel syndrome?

Carpal tunnel syndrome is caused by increased pressure on the median nerve and the risk increases with the following:

- Anatomic factors: fractures, women
- Nerve-damaging diseases: diabetes
- Inflammatory conditions: arthritis
- Alterations in body fluids: pregnancy
- Workplace factors: posture, vibrations, repetition



What are possible signs and symptoms?

- Pain, numbness, and tingling in thumb and first 2 fingers or the palm
- Poor circulation – cold, swelling, or bluish color
- Weakness or clumsiness in the muscles of the hand
- Symptoms worsen when carrying items or when raising arms overhead

How does physical therapy help?

- Rest, ice, and support with bracing
- Stretching – tight arm, forearm, and wrist muscles
- Tendon and nerve gliding exercises
- Postural muscle strengthening
- Manual therapy – massage, mobilization, stretching, myofascial release
- Education about posture, body mechanics, and activity modification
- Modalities – electrical stimulation, ultrasound, cold laser

