



CANADIAN PLASTIC SURGERY CENTRE

Carpal Tunnel

What is Carpal Tunnel Syndrome?

Carpal tunnel is a condition in the hand, which is caused by compression of the median nerve, as it passes from the wrist into the hand.

What symptoms do I experience with carpal tunnel syndrome?

When the nerve is compressed, it causes numbness, tingling and pain in the thumb, index, middle and 1/2 of the ring finger. Over time and with increased severity, it can cause weakness in grip strength and wasting of the muscle at the base of the thumb.

How is this condition treated?

Carpal tunnel can and is usually initially treated conservatively with a splint and physiotherapy. However, if the compression of your nerve is severe, then surgical release either through traditional open methods or endoscopically is needed to manage this condition.

Carpal Tunnel Release Post-Op Instructions

- You should not experience much pain after your procedure. If you experience pain, please take over-the-counter Tylenol (acetaminophen) Extra Strength or Advil (ibuprofen) for pain relief.
- Keep the dressing clean, dry and intact for 2 days after your surgery. You can remove the dressing and Tensors after 48 hrs. Please wash the wound(s) with soap and water. Expose your incision to air to allow it to dry.
- Please note that swelling in the fingers is normal post-operatively due to the Tensors. If the Tensors are too constrictive, please remove them and leave gauze in place for 2 days.
- Your follow-up appointment should be 10-14 days after your procedure to assess the incision and remove the sutures.
- Please note that a little bit of swelling over the incision is normal. However, please watch out for signs of infection, such as redness that spreads beyond your incisions, the breaking open of your skin and/or pus that drains from your incision. If you have any of these signs, please call the surgical clinic or our office to book an appointment to see Dr. Chivers as soon as possible.

Recovery course:

- You can start using your hands within 2 days after surgery. However, you should avoid strenuous activities or heavy lifting for 10-14 days until the sutures are removed.
- You may continue to feel numbness and tingling after your procedure. This will continue to improve over a 6-month to 1-year period after surgery.
- You will feel a slight decrease in grip strength after your procedure, which will improve over a 6-week period with use of the hand and physiotherapy.
- Feeling a small hard bump over the incision or surgical area after surgery is normal. This is a result of scar tissue development. After your stitches are removed, we recommend that you start massaging the area to help with the healing of your skin. Over time, the hardness should resolve. Massaging will also help with the sensitivity that develops with non-use. You should massage your hand 3-4 times a day.

If you have any questions or non-emergent concerns, please call our office at (416) 244-8377, Monday-Friday 9 am-6 pm, or email us at info@canadiansurgery.com.