

# WHAT IS CARPAL TUNNEL SYNDROME?

- Carpal tunnel syndrome is a painful condition that affects the hands and wrists

## WHAT ARE COMMON SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS?

- Numbness and tingling of the hand, fingers
- Pain in wrist, arm
- Weakness in hand

## WHAT CAUSES CARPAL TUNNEL SYNDROME?

- Carpal tunnel is caused by a pinched nerve in the wrist
- Increased pressure on the median nerve in the carpal tunnel
- Disorder may be due to smaller size of carpal tunnel

## WHAT INCREASES MY RISK?

- Repetitive tasks, such as assembly line work, computer work
- Medical conditions such as arthritis, alcoholism, diabetes, obesity, pregnancy
- Wrist injuries
- More frequent in women than men

## WHAT ARE POSSIBLE COMPLICATIONS?

- If untreated, permanent damage may occur in the hand

## WHAT CAN I EXPECT?

- Mild symptoms should go away with treatment and will have normal use of hands
- Severe symptoms may require surgery

## HOW DO I REDUCE MY RISK?

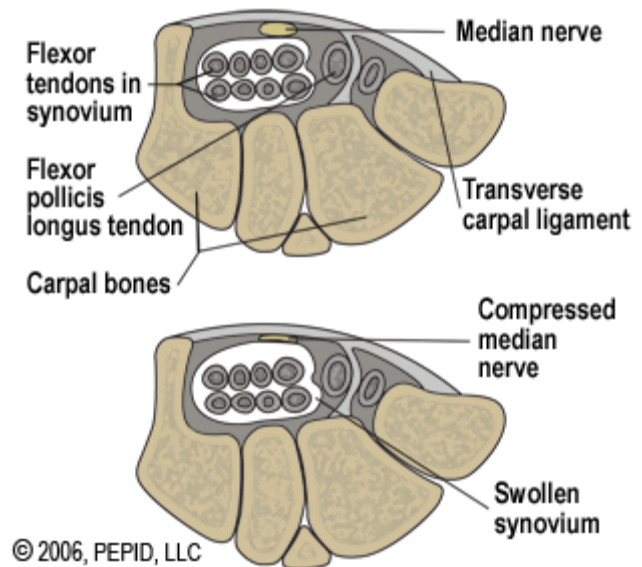
- There are no specific preventive measures

## DIAGNOSIS AND TREATMENT

### WHAT GENERAL MEASURES SHOULD I TAKE?

- Your healthcare provider will exam your hand and ask about your symptoms
- Activity
  - Exercise regularly to improve fitness
- Diet
  - Eat a well-balanced diet
  - Maintain healthy weight
- To Learn More about your condition:
  - National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke (NINDS), NIH Neurological Institute  
P.O. Box 5801, Bethesda, MD 20824; (800) 352-9424; website: [www.ninds.nih.gov/](http://www.ninds.nih.gov/)

### WHAT ARE COMMON LABS AND TESTS?



- Medical tests may include:
  - X-ray
  - Tests on functioning of the median nerve

#### WHAT ARE MY TREATMENT OPTIONS?

- Treatment of mild symptoms may include:
  - Resting the hand
  - Using ice on the hand
  - Wearing a splint
- More severe symptoms may require surgery

#### WHAT MEDICATIONS MAY BE PRESCRIBED?

- Your healthcare provider may recommend:
  - Aspirin or ibuprofen for pain and inflammation
  - Anti-inflammatory drugs or cortisone injections

#### WHAT CAUTIONS SHOULD I TAKE?

- Minimize stress on your hands and wrists
- Rest hands, take breaks from repetitive activities

#### WHEN SHOULD I SEEK MEDICAL HELP?

- You or a family member has symptoms of carpal tunnel syndrome
- If pain, numbness or weakness does not improve

#### MY HEALTHCARE PROVIDERS COMMENTS/NOTES

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#### REFERENCES

1. National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke (NINDS); Carpal Tunnel Syndrome; [www.ninds.nih.gov](http://www.ninds.nih.gov); Retrieved January 23, 2013
2. MedlinePlus; A service of the National Library of Medicine, National Institute of Health; Carpal Tunnel Syndrome; [www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus](http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus); Retrieved January 23, 2013
3. MedicineNet. Diseases and Conditions, Carpal Tunnel Syndrome; <http://www.medicinenet.com>; Retrieved January 23, 2013

*Created: January 2013*