

Carpal Tunnel Syndrome



Painful
median nerve



Carpal
tunnel

Overview

Pain, numbness and tingling in your hand may be from carpal tunnel syndrome. It happens when the area around the main nerve to your hand is too tight. The nerve is called the median nerve. And the small space in your wrist where it passes is called the carpal tunnel.

Causes and Risk Factors

Any crowding of the median nerve can cause this problem. Wrist injuries, diabetes and rheumatoid arthritis are causes. Pregnancy and conditions that cause your body to hold onto fluid may also cause it. Carpal tunnel syndrome is more common in women. You have a higher risk if your carpal tunnels are smaller than normal. Some think it's caused by repeated motions of the hand and fingers, especially a lot of typing at the computer. But evidence for that link is not clear.

Symptoms

Carpal tunnel syndrome can cause numbness or tingling in your hand. You may feel it in your thumb and in your index, middle and ring fingers. Your grip may be weak. Carpal tunnel syndrome may affect one or both hands.

Treatment

To get better, you may need to rest your hand and avoid doing the things that make your symptoms worse. Ice, wrist splints, medicine and injections may help. If they don't, surgery may be an option. Your healthcare provider can create a care plan that is right for your needs.