



# Personal Decision Guide

## Carpal Tunnel Syndrome



Use this guide to talk with your doctor or support person



to help you make a decision.

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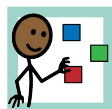
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Making a Decision



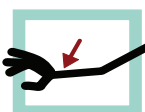
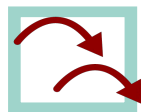
### SECTION 1



#### What is Carpal Tunnel Syndrome?

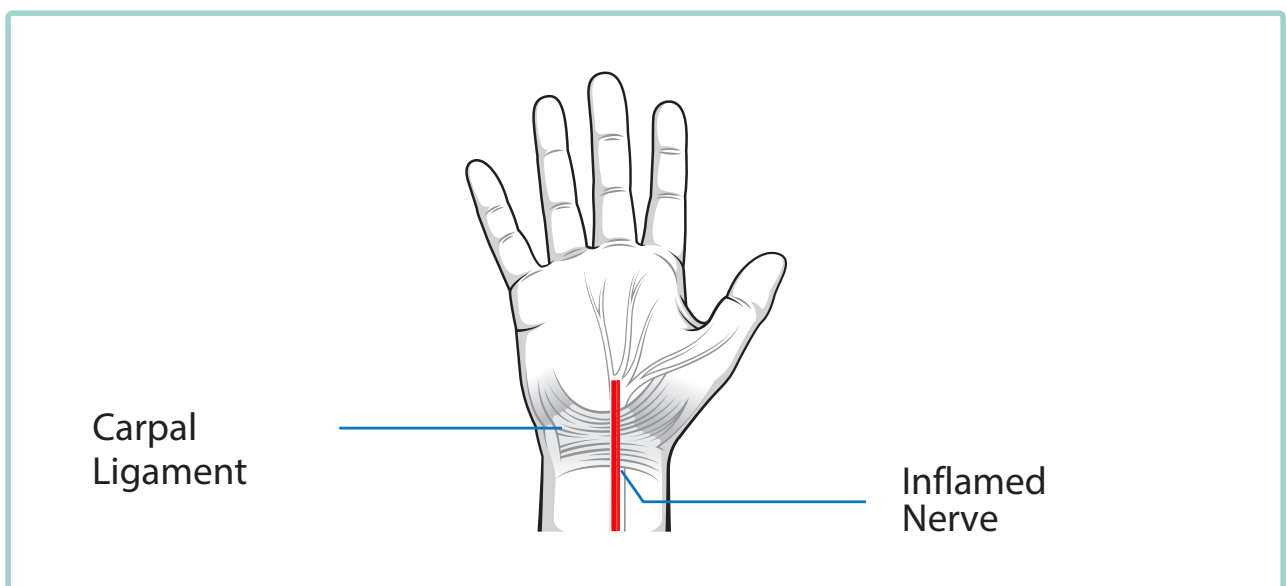


Carpal tunnel syndrome is caused by swelling and pressure on



a nerve in the wrist. Repeated hand and wrist movements may cause this.

#### Carpal Tunnel Syndrome: Inside Your Wrist





### You may have:



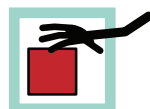
Pain.



Weak thumb and finger muscles.



Loss of feeling.



Difficulty using your fingers and hand.



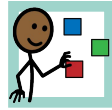
Tingling or numbness in your fingers and hand.



## Personal Decision Guide

### Carpal Tunnel Syndrome

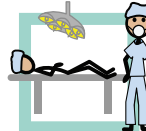
## SECTION 2



### Treatment Choices



A. Non-Surgery



B. Surgery



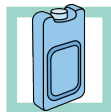
### A. Non-Surgery Treatment: 7 Options



1-2



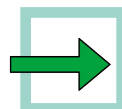
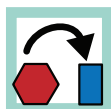
1) Rest your hand 1 to 2 weeks by using it a lot less.



10-15



2) Put an ice pack on your palm and wrist for 10 to 15 minutes at a time.



3) Change the way you do some hand movements.

## Personal Decision Guide



4) Ask your doctor about taking medicine called non-steroid anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs)



Read the label for instructions and any side effects.



5) Wear a wrist splint.



6) Work with an Occupational or Physical Therapist.



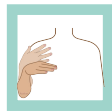
7) Ask your doctor about corticosteroid shots or pills.

## Non-Surgery Treatment: Benefits and Risks



### Benefits

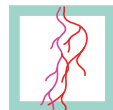
- 
- 
- 
- No surgery risks or costs.



- Could be all you need to get better.



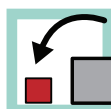
### Risks



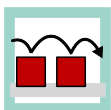
- Bad symptoms over time could cause nerve damage that



never gets better.











- Temporary increase in pain, or a small chance of nerve damage,



after a corticosteroid shot.



## Non-Surgery Treatment: What Have You Tried?

Treatment	Tried	Can Not Try	Want To Try	Helped	Did Not Help
 Rest	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
 Ice	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
 Change ways to do tasks	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
 NSAID medicine	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
 Wrist splint	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
 Occupational or Physical Therapy	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
  Corticosteroid shot or pills	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



## **B. Carpal Tunnel Surgery**



Your doctor might recommend surgery if:

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You've had very bad symptoms for a long time, so you're at



risk of having nerve damage that never gets better.

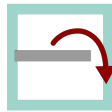
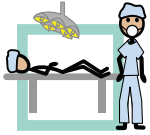


Tests show that you have nerve damage.



You have tried non-surgery treatments and they haven't helped.

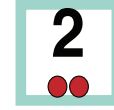
## **Surgery: What is it?**



Surgery takes the pressure off of a nerve in the wrist.



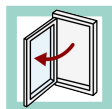
The doctor cuts a ligament to stop the pressure on the nerve.



The surgery is called Carpal Tunnel Release. There are 2 types:



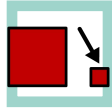
1. Endoscopic



2. Open



## 1. Endoscopic



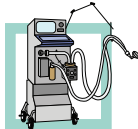
or



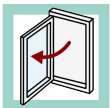
Your doctor makes one small cut in the wrist, or one small cut in the wrist



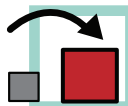
and one in the palm. They put a thin tube with a camera attached (endoscope)



into the cut. Surgical tools are put in with the scope to cut the ligament.



## 2. Open

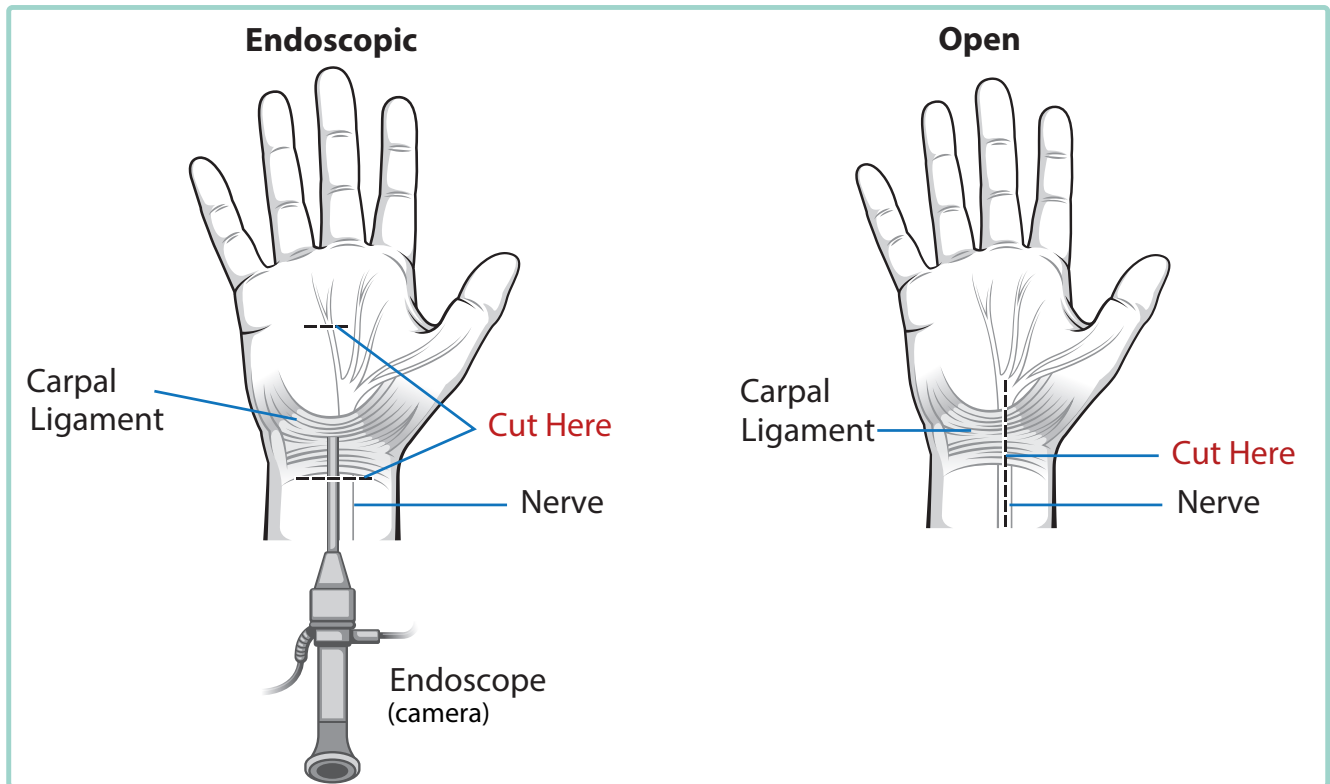


Your doctor makes a larger cut in the palm of your hand to cut

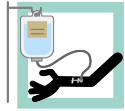


the ligament. Open surgery can take longer to heal than endoscopic.

## Where the doctor cuts for surgery:



## Surgery: What to Expect?



- You have local anesthetic, so you are awake but won't have pain.



- You go home on the same day.



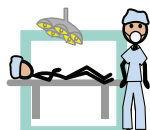
- You must avoid heavy use of your hand for up to 3 months.



- Healing is usually faster with endoscopic surgery.



- You may return to regular activities within 2 - 8 weeks, depending on

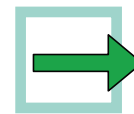


which hand had the surgery. Talk to your doctor about healing time.

## Surgery: Benefits and Risks



### Benefits



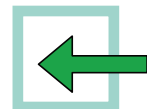
- Surgery can make symptoms get better or go away.



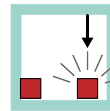
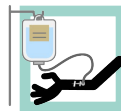
- It can prevent permanent nerve damage.



### Risks



- Surgery doesn't always help. Your symptoms may come back.



- Infection or a problem from anesthesia is rare but can occur.



# Personal Decision Guide

## Carpal Tunnel Syndrome

### SECTION 3



### Making a Decision



What's important to me (my values):



Do not agree



No opinion



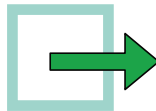
Agree



I am worried about problems from surgery.

☐☐☐

I am worried about nerve damage that never gets better.

☐☐☐

I want the pain to go away, no matter what.

☐☐☐

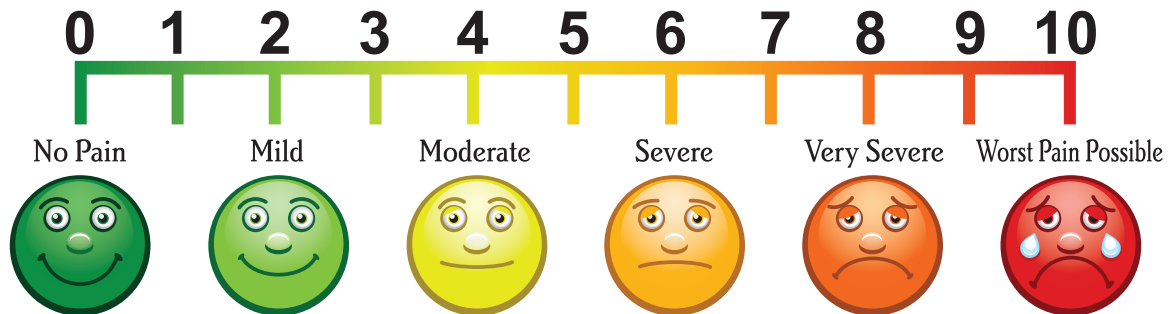
I want to try all the non-surgery options first.

☐☐☐



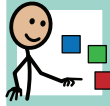



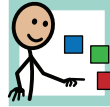



Other important things to me:

## Personal Decision Guide

Some people make a choice depending on how much pain they feel in their wrist. Circle your level of pain:



### Do You Have What You Need to Make a Decision?

   <p>Do you understand your treatment options?</p>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
    <p>Do you understand the risks and benefits of your options?</p>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
   <p>Do you have the support you need to make a decision?</p>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>

## What is Your Decision ?



☐ Non-Surgery Treatment



☐ Surgery

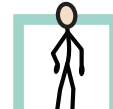
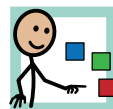


☐ I Don't Know (Undecided)

If you haven't decided, check any of these, if they apply:



☐ I need more information



☐ I want to talk about my choices with someone

(add name if you know it): \_\_\_\_\_ .



☐ I have something else to say.

# Personal Decision Guide



## How Sure Are You About Your Decision?



Not sure



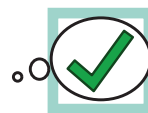
a little sure



somewhat sure



sure



very sure

1	2	3	4	5
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## List Any Questions or Concerns

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## What Do I Do Next?

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Tell my doctor my decision | <input type="checkbox"/> Schedule a date for surgery |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Get more information       | <input type="checkbox"/> Try a non-surgery treatment |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Talk to a support person   | <input type="checkbox"/> Other                       |

**Note: The information in this guide does not replace the advice of a doctor.**



Created by Community Vision & OHSU with a grant from the WITH Foundation