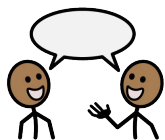




Personal Decision Guide

Carpal Tunnel Syndrome



Use this guide to talk with your doctor or support person



to help you make a decision.

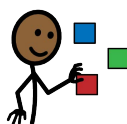
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What is Carpal Tunnel Syndrome?

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Making a Decision



SECTION 1



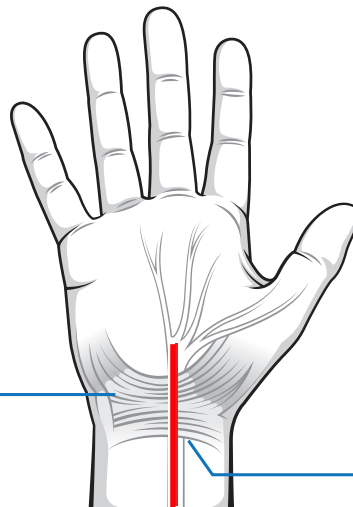
What is Carpal Tunnel Syndrome?



Carpal tunnel syndrome is caused by swelling and pressure on a nerve in the wrist.

Carpal Tunnel Syndrome: Inside Your Wrist

Carpal
Ligament



Inflamed
Nerve



This can be caused by hand and wrist movements that you do a lot. These are called repetitive motions.



Swelling in the wrist can also cause carpal tunnel symptoms.



You may have:



Pain.



Weak thumb and finger muscles.



Loss of feeling.



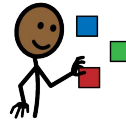
Difficulty using your fingers and hand.



Tingling or numbness in your fingers or hand.



SECTION 2



Treatment Choices



A. Non-Surgery



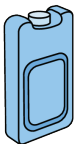
B. Surgery



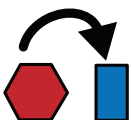
A. Non-Surgery Treatment: 7 Options



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



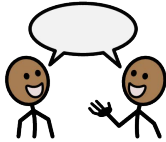
2) Put an ice pack on your palm and wrist for 10 to 15 minutes at a time.



3) Change the way you do some hand movements.



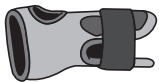
4) Take medicine called non-steroid anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs)



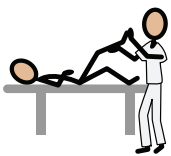
Talk to your doctor before taking any medicine. They can cause side effects.



Read and follow all instructions on the label.



5) Wear a wrist splint.



6) Work with an Occupational or Physical Therapist.



7) Ask your doctor about corticosteroid shots or pills.



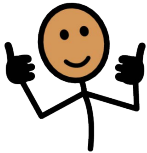
Non-Surgery Treatment: Benefits and Risks



Benefits



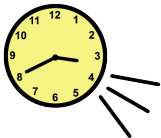
- No surgery risks or costs.



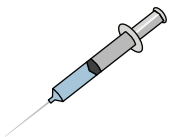
- Could be all you need to get better.



Risks



- Bad symptoms over time could cause nerve damage that never gets better.


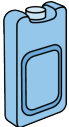
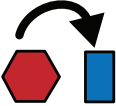


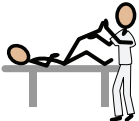



- Temporary increase in pain or a small chance of nerve damage after a corticosteroid shot

Personal Decision Guide



Non-Surgery Treatment: What Have You Tried?

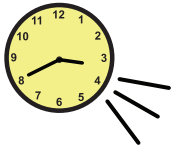
Treatment	Tried	Can Not Try	Want To Try	Helped	Did Not Help
 Rest	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
 Ice	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input 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"/>



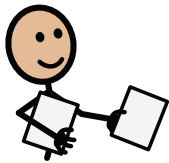
B. Carpal Tunnel Surgery



Your doctor might recommend surgery if:



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 pressure on the nerve.

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



1. Endoscopic



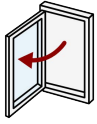
Your doctor makes one small cut in the wrist, or one small cut in the wrist and one in the palm.



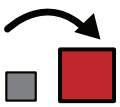
They put a thin tube with a camera attached (endoscope) into the cut.



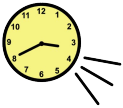
Surgical tools are put in with the scope to cut the ligament.



2. Open

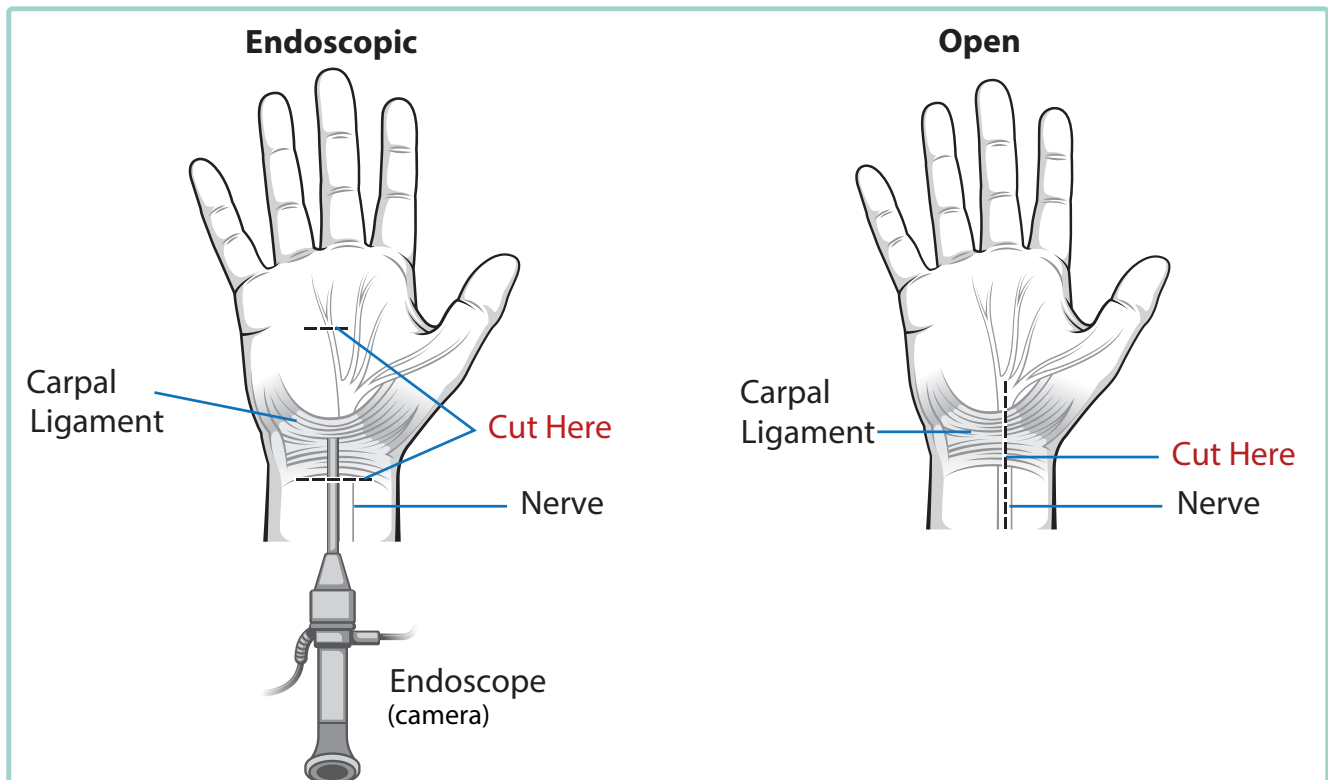


Your doctor makes a larger cut in the palm of your hand to cut the ligament.



Open surgery may take longer to heal than endoscopic.

Where the doctor cuts for surgery:





Personal Decision Guide



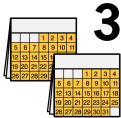
Surgery: What to Expect?



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



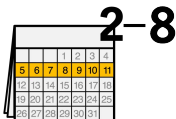
- You go home on the same day.



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



- Healing can be faster with endoscopic surgery.



- You may return to regular activities in 2 - 8 weeks, depending on which hand you had the surgery.



- Talk to your doctor about healing time.



Surgery: Benefits and Risks



Benefits



- Surgery can make symptoms get better or go away.



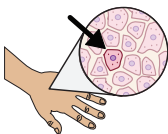
- It can prevent permanent nerve damage.



Risks



- Your symptoms may come back.



- Infection is rare but can happen.



- A problem from anesthesia is rare but can happen.



Personal Decision Guide

Carpal Tunnel Syndrome

SECTION 3



Making a Decision



Do not agree











No opinion



Agree

What's important to me (my values):

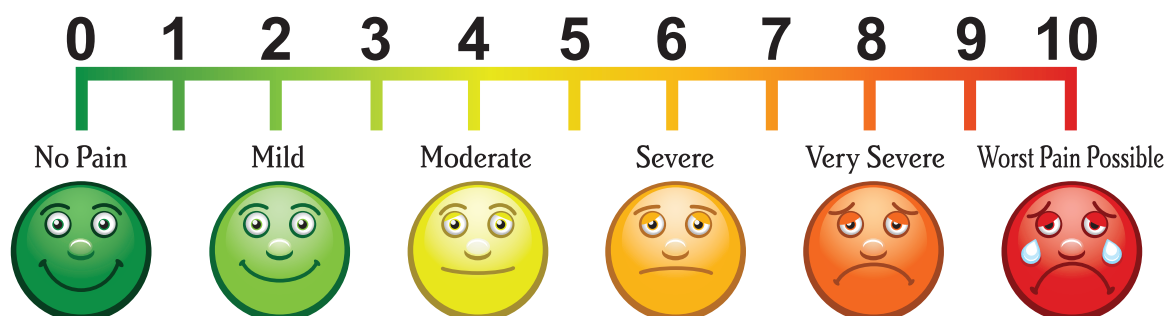
  <p>I am worried about problems from surgery.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
  <p>I am worried about nerve damage that never gets better.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
  <p>I want the pain to go away, no matter what.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
  <p>I want to try non-surgery options first.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>




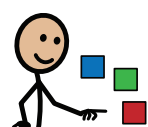




Other important things to me:

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?

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

What is Your Decision ?



☐ Non-Surgery Treatment



☐ Surgery

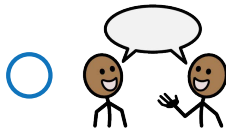


☐ I Don't Know (Undecided)

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



I need more information

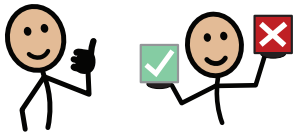


I want to talk about my choices with someone

(add name if you know it): _____.



I have something else to say.



How Sure Are You About Your Decision?



Not sure



a little sure



somewhat sure



sure



very sure

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---



List Any Questions or Concerns



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