

### Carpal Tunnel Surgery

#### Introduction

Carpal tunnel syndrome is pressure on a nerve in your wrist. It can cause pain, numbness and burning or tingling sensation to the hand and fingers. If your symptoms get worse and other non-surgical treatments have not worked the surgery may be recommended.

During Carpal Tunnel Release surgery, an injection is given to numb your wrist so you do not feel pain (local anaesthetic) and a small cut is made in your hand. The carpal tunnel inside your wrist is cut so it no longer puts pressure on the nerve. This surgery is usually performed as a day case which means you go home the same day and don't need to stay in hospital overnight.

Whilst the surgery is usually performed under local anaesthetic as a day case, it is helpful to have someone to drive you home as it can be uncomfortable to use the hand for the first few days.

#### Guidance for Patients

There are some things you can do to help manage your symptoms while you wait for your surgery.

##### **Wear a wrist splint**

A wrist splint is something you wear on your hand to keep your wrist straight. It helps to relieve pressure on the nerve and you can wear it at night while you sleep. Wrist splints can be purchased online or from pharmacies.

##### **Stop or cut down on things that may be causing it**

Stop or cut down on anything that causes you to frequently bend your wrist or grip hard, such as using vibrating tools for work or playing an instrument.

##### **Manage your pain**

You can take pain relief such as Paracetamol, Anti-inflammatory creams, Codeine, Non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs. If you need any advice, your local pharmacy will be able to help.

There are a number of resources to help you manage your pain:

- [10 ways to ease pain](#)
- The Chartered Institute of Physiotherapy has produced helpful [guidance for managing pain and improving your quality of life](#)

# My Planned Care Patient Information Platform

## Mental health support:

It's important during this time to take care of your mind as well as your body. You might be feeling down, worried or anxious while you wait for your surgery. Remember it's okay to feel like this, these are normal reactions. There are a range of services available to help you manage during this time. Take a look at our [mental health support page](#) for more information.

## What should I do if my health is deteriorating?

This information is designed to help you manage your symptoms and stay in the best possible health while you wait. It is however possible that some of your symptoms may get worse while you are waiting for your surgery. There are some things to look out for that would indicate you should seek medical help:

1. If your symptoms gets worse to the point that it is unmanageable with the pain relief suggested by the pharmacist or doctor and you are struggling to cope with it;
2. If you start to see a lot of muscle wasting in your hand or if you find you lose strength in your hand and you are not able to grip a mug or kettle for example;
3. If you develop persistent numbness in your hand.

If you experience any of these issues we would recommend getting in touch with your hospital team. The number and email should be on your last hospital appointment letter.

Alternatively, you can contact your GP practice. Whilst your GP does not have access to the hospital waiting list to get you seen sooner, if your condition is getting worse they can assess you, give advice and can contact the hospital on your behalf if necessary.

## Links to further information

[NHS.uk information on Carpal Tunnel Syndrome](#)

[Versus Arthritis information on Carpal Tunnel Syndrome](#)