

Orthopaedics - Carpel Tunnel Release

Introduction

The COVID-19 pandemic has had a significant impact on the NHS ability to provide routine elective services. We recognise that patients are waiting longer than we would all like and it is not always possible to identify when treatment will take place. This document provides you with information on how you are able to support yourself while waiting to attend the hospital. The guidance has been written by clinicians who are responsible for your care.

When you are waiting for further treatment it can sometimes feel like a long wait. The information and advice here is aimed at helping you manage that wait so you arrive for your appointment in the best possible physical and mental health.

The NHS has limited resources which means that we are unable to treat you as quickly as we would like. Each healthcare provider has to consider the type of help you need, how quickly you need treatment, the best course of action to help you and when and where you can be seen.

The process of sorting patients based on their individual needs is called prioritisation. The system of prioritisation is applied consistently across the NHS to help us to decide the order in which patients receive their treatment. This is essential to ensure that we provide care based on need. The system means that care is delivered in the fairest way possible.

Once a referral has been made from primary care to secondary care, the specialist team conduct assessments and then agree with you on the right course of action. At this stage, the urgency will be assessed. If you have a long-term health condition, for example, you may need treatment faster than someone without.

Guidance for Patients

Whilst you are waiting for your carpal tunnel surgery 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. A wrist splint can help relieve pain and will keep your wrist straight. It helps to relieve pressure on the nerve. You may choose to wear it at night while you sleep. You'll have to wear a splint for at least 4 weeks before it starts to feel better. You can buy wrist splints online or from pharmacies. Painkillers like paracetamol or ibuprofen may help carpal tunnel pain short-term. But there's little evidence to say they can treat the cause of CTS, so it's important not to rely on them.

Support regarding losing weight, getting active, drinking less or quitting smoking is available from Live Well Dorset – register online at livewelldorset.co.uk or call on freephone 0800 840 1628.

My Planned Care Patient Information Platform

What should I do if my health is deteriorating?

If you experience an increase in pain you should in the first instance contact your General Practitioner for review and advice. GP surgeries are still open and are working differently to how they did before the COVID-19 pandemic. GP practices continue to make best use of telephone, online and video consultations. Face-to-face appointments are still being given to those who need it.

Urgent Health Advice

For urgent health advice about physical or mental health, when it's not an emergency, please call 111 from any landline or mobile phone. You can also visit www.nhs.uk. The NHS 111 service is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Life Threatening Emergencies

For something life threatening – severe bleeding, breathing difficulties or chest pains – please dial 999.

Contact Us

Email: +orthopaedicsecretaries@dchft.nhs.uk