



Carpal Tunnel Syndrome in Pregnancy

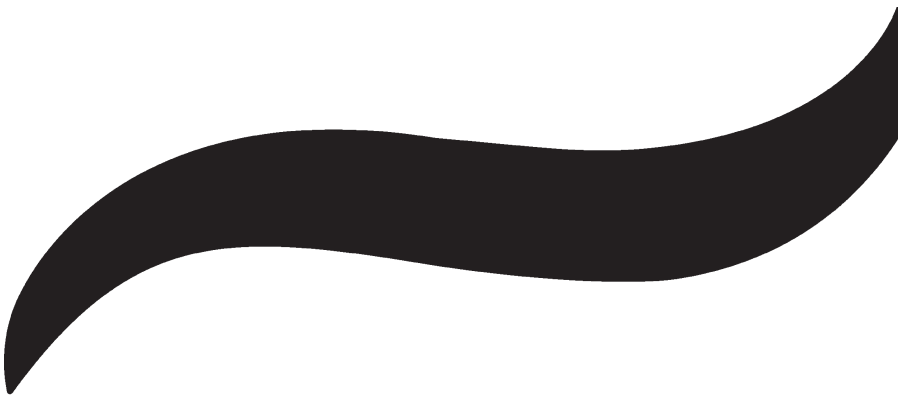
Information for patients

Pelvic Health Physiotherapy Team
Maternity Unit, University Hospital Wishaw

Website:

www.nhslanarkshire.scot.nhs.uk/services/maternity-services/

Facebook: NHS Lanarkshire Mums & Babies

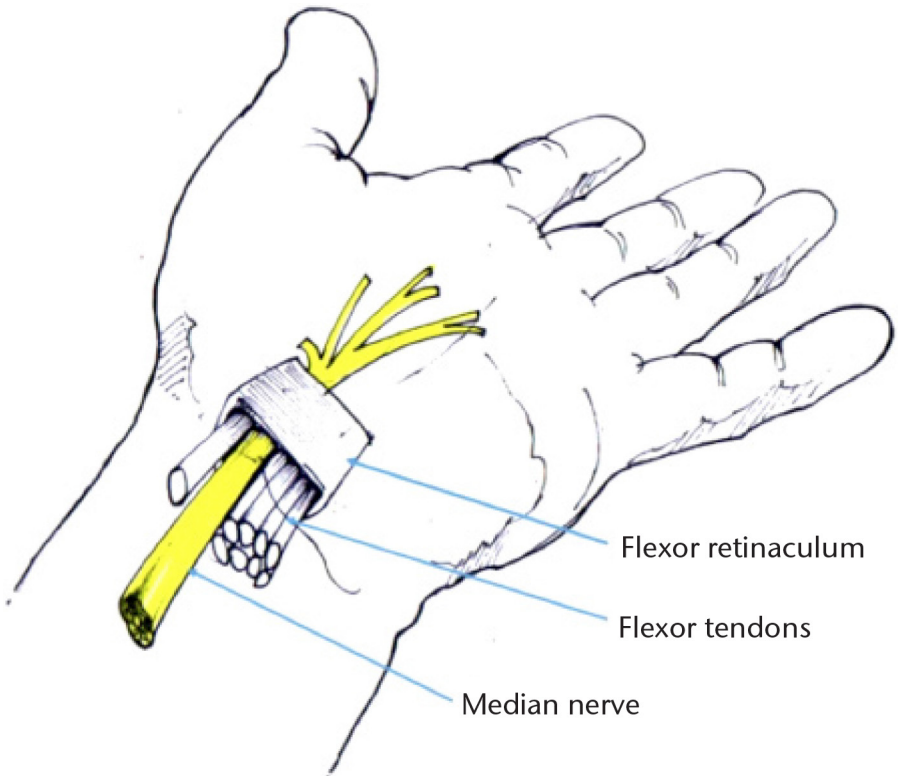


WHAT IS THE CARPAL TUNNEL?

Carpal Tunnel Syndrome is a common condition where the main nerve to your hand gets compressed at the wrist. This can cause numbness in your hand.

The 'Carpal Tunnel' is a passageway in which the nerve and tendons pass through so that you are able to move your fingers and use your hand.

The wrist



Compression of the nerve in the tunnel can lead to a disorder known as 'Carpal Tunnel syndrome'.

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CARPAL TUNNEL IN PREGNANCY

Carpal tunnel syndrome affects up to 60% of women who are pregnant. This is usually caused by a build-up of fluid which compresses onto the carpal tunnel. This build-up of fluid is often due to changes in your hormones during pregnancy.

If you have swollen hands and/or fingers and also notice swelling in your face, have headaches or see flashing lights call Maternity Triage on 01698 366210.

WHAT ARE THE SYMPTOMS OF CARPAL TUNNEL SYNDROME?

You may have these symptoms in one or both of your hands:

- ❖ Altered feeling or tingling in your hand, affecting your thumb, index, middle and ring finger.
- ❖ It is unusual for your little finger to be involved.
- ❖ Tingling is often worse at night.
- ❖ Symptoms can get worse with repetitive tasks such as typing or writing.
- ❖ Clumsiness of your hand and dropping things.
- ❖ Pain in your wrist and forearm.

WHAT CAN I DO TO HELP?

Rest and raise your hand:

- ❖ Try to avoid heavy lifting and repetitive movements which can make your symptoms feel worse. For example, writing, typing, DIY or housework.
- ❖ Rest with your hand up on a pillow or above your head if possible. This will help to drain away any fluid from your hands.
- ❖ You may need to remove your rings if your fingers become very swollen.

Heat and ice:

- ❖ In the morning, you may feel that your hands are sore and stiff. You should try some gentle wrist exercises in warm water for 5-10 minutes (See page 6).
- ❖ You can also try ice packs wrapped in a clean, thin towel to help to reduce swelling and pain. These can be placed on your wrist for up to 10 minutes. Do not put ice directly onto your skin.

Wrist splints:

- ❖ You may find that your pain is worse during the night. This can be caused by a build-up of fluid when sleeping and the natural relaxation of your wrists into a bent position. You can try a wrist splint which will stop your wrist bending during the night and can help to reduce your symptoms. You can also wear the splint during the day if you find it helpful if certain activities make your symptoms worse.
- ❖ If you need wrist splints, please complete the self-referral form (on page 9 & 10) and take this to your nearest available splint clinic. The clinics are listed at the end of the form.

EXERCISES

Try these exercises a few times per day to help with your symptoms:

Wrist bend (forward and back)

Rest your elbow on a table, arm pointing up, wrist straight. Gently bend your wrist forward at a right angle and hold for 5 seconds. Straighten your wrist. Gently bend it backwards and hold for 5 seconds. Do 3 sets of 10 repetitions.



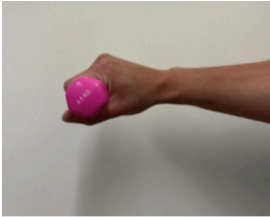
Finger bend

Start with your fingers held out straight. Gently bend the middle joints of your fingers down toward your upper palm and hold for 5 seconds. Do 3 sets of 10 repetitions.



Wrist stretch with weight

Holding a light weight (e.g a tin of beans or 500g weight), stretch your arm out in front with your palm down. Slowly bend your wrist upward, and then return to the starting position. Do 3 sets of 10 repetitions. Gradually increase the weight you hold.



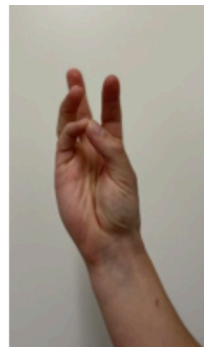
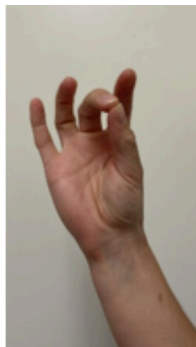
Hand squeeze

Squeeze a rubber ball and hold for 5 seconds. Do 3 sets of 10 repetitions.



Finger opposition

With your elbow resting on a table or arm of the chair, touch your thumb to your index finger, then to your middle finger, ring finger and small finger. Repeat 10 times.



AFTER YOUR BABY IS BORN

Carpal tunnel is a mild condition and you don't have to have any treatment if you do not wish to.

The symptoms often get better on their own over time. For example, following the delivery of your baby.

If your symptoms do not improve after the delivery of your baby, you should contact your GP to discuss other treatment options.

USEFUL LINKS

Pelvic, Obstetric and Gynaecological Physiotherapy website:

<https://pogp.csp.org.uk/booklets>



Physiotherapy Musculoskeletal Service
**Patient Completed Self Referral:
 Walking aid/Wrist splint**



Please read and complete all parts of this form then send to one of the clinics noted on the back of the form.

Date form completed:

____ / ____ / ____

Name: Address: Postcode: Date of birth: Age: <input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female	GP name: Address:
Phone - Home: - Work: - Mobile:	Occupation:

Falls	Yes	No
Have you fallen more than once in the last 6 months NOT the result of a simple accident, slip/trip?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Aid/Appliance Requested	
Walking Aid: If known, which walking aid do you feel would be beneficial to you: _____ _____	
Is this to replace a current walking aid?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Would this be a new walking aid for you?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Wrist Splint: <input type="checkbox"/> I require a left wrist splint <input type="checkbox"/> I require a right wrist splint	
Which size do you require? (please tick) <input type="checkbox"/> Small <input type="checkbox"/> Medium <input type="checkbox"/> Large <input type="checkbox"/> Extra large <input type="checkbox"/> Don't know	

- You will first be contacted by phone. Thereafter,
- wrist splints will be posted to you.
 - Replacement walking aids can be collected.
 - New walking aids can be provided by appointment only following satisfactory Covid -19 screening.





Clinic		
Physiotherapy Department University Hospital Hairmyres 218 Eaglesham Road East Kilbride G75 8RG		
Physiotherapy Department Blantyre Health Centre Victoria Street Blantyre G72 0BS		
Physiotherapy Department Coatbridge Health Centre Centre Park Court Coatbridge ML5 3AP		
Physiotherapy Department Stonehouse Hospital Strathaven Road Stonehouse ML9 3NT		
Physiotherapy Department Motherwell Health Centre 138-144 Windmillhill Street Motherwell ML1 1TB		
Physiotherapy Department Rutherglen health centre 130 Stonelaw Road Rutherglen G73 2PQ		
Physiotherapy Department Central Health centre North Carbrain Road Cumbernauld G67 1BJ		

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NHS Lanarkshire - for local services and the latest health news visit www.nhslanarkshire.scot.nhs.uk
NHS Lanarkshire General
Enquiry Line: 0300 30 30 243

NHS inform - The national health information service for Scotland.
www.nhsinform.co.uk
Tel No: 0800 22 44 88

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