

Carpal Tunnel Syndrome – Talking about your care options!

The doctor has said that you have **Carpal Tunnel Syndrome**. So, read this leaflet to find out what you can do.

Think about what you need, what you enjoy doing and how you live. You can talk about how different treatments might affect you.

Below are some questions you might want to ask about the different treatments you can try.			
Questions	Small lifestyle changes	Splinting of the wrist	Injection into the wrist
What is the treatment?	Seeing how things go by making changes to how you live.	Wearing a splint on your hand and wrist.	Injection of a small dose of steroid (cortisone) into the wrist.
How will this help me?	If you look at what makes your condition worse and then try and reduce the amount of time you spend doing it then this should help.	It will reduce pressure on the nerve. The splint is good for night-time symptoms. You can also wear the splint during the day.	It will reduce swelling around the nerve. This can help if symptoms happen during pregnancy or you have hypothyroidism (low thyroxine level).
Are there any risks?	No, and about three in ten people no longer suffer after making lifestyle changes.	No, and more than half of people will notice their symptoms improve.	Yes, there is a small risk of damage to the nerve. However, most people will feel an improvement after an injection.
How long will it take to feel better?	Some people find their symptoms get better within six months. This is more likely if you are young, female or pregnant.	About half of people have less symptoms within three to six months after starting to wear a splint.	Most people find their symptoms settle within one to two weeks of the injection. Over time, more than half of people find their symptoms don't come back.
Will I need to have more treatments?	If things don't feel better then talk to your doctor again.	If the splints don't help then you may be able to get some physiotherapy.	The injection can be done more than once.
What else can I do?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Physiotherapy If you've tried all the above and things don't feel better then talk to your doctor again. You may be able to get some physiotherapy. • Carpal Tunnel Operation This operation may not be suitable for everyone. An operation is usually for people who have tried other treatments first. There is a small risk on injury to the nerve. Heavy lifting is not advised for two weeks after the operation. Heavy gripping is not advised for up to six weeks. 		

Once you have made your decision please complete the below form and return to your GP practice.

Name:

Date of Birth:

Doctor:

Date completed:

Do you feel SURE about the choice for you? **Yes / No**

Do you know the benefits and risks of each option? **Yes/ No**

Are you clear about which benefits and risks matter most to you? **Yes / No**

Do you have enough support and advice to make a choice? **Yes / No**

Which options have you chosen? **Wait and See / Splint / Steroid Injection / Painkillers / Surgery**

How satisfied are you with this decision? **1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10**

