



RUSH MEMORIAL HOSPITAL
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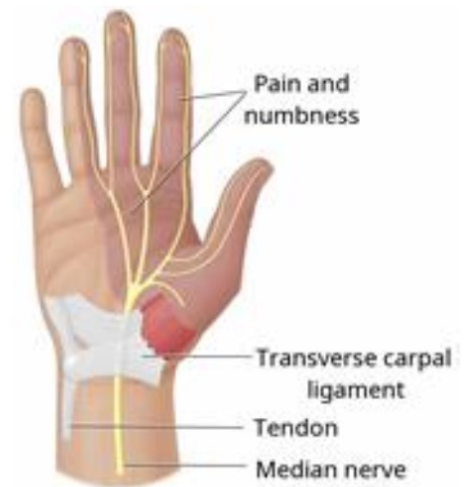
Surgical Patient Education

Carpal Tunnel Release Surgery

What is Carpal Tunnel Release Surgery?

Open Carpal Tunnel Release is a surgery to relieve symptoms caused by carpal tunnel syndrome. The median nerve gets swollen and the swelling pinches the nerves and causes pain and numbness.

The surgeon will cut the transverse ligament to make more room in the carpal tunnel space and reduce pain and swelling.



What are the Risks?

- **Infection** - There is always a risk of infection when you make surgical cuts to the skin, this is minimal with a carpal tunnel release.
- **Bleeding** - There is a risk of bleeding as with all surgical incisions but it is rare with carpal tunnel surgery.
- **Injury to the median nerve** - The area you are releasing is around the median nerve so there is a risk of injuring the nerve but this is uncommon.

What happens during the procedure?

- You will be taken to the operating room, the surgeon will inject a numbing medication into your wrist so you have no feeling in the area he will be working on.
- You will be placed on monitors and watched closely.
- After your wrist is numb the physician will make an incision in your wrist and perform the release.
- Your skin will then be sutured closed.
- A bandage/dressing will then be placed and wrapped around your wrist. You will be taken back to the pre-operative area.

Before Surgery

- You may be asked to stop certain medications such as aspirin or ibuprofen. Be sure to check with your surgeon's office to see what medications to stop.
- You will be instructed on if you may eat or drink before surgery.
- You will be asked to shower the night before or morning of surgery.

After Surgery

- You will have a dressing on your wrist.
- Your hand will be numb for a few hours.
- If you shower, use a waterproof dressing or bandage to cover your dressing on your wrist so it does not get wet.
- You may be given a prescription for medication for pain, sometimes this can also be over the counter. It is important to take the medicine as prescribed and alternate the medicine to get maximum pain control.

Recovery After an Carpal Tunnel Release

How long will I be out of work?

- Depending on your job, you will have restrictions for up to 4 weeks.
- If you have any heavy lifting over 5 pounds or repetitive movements, it can make your time out of work longer.
- You may be able to go back to work sooner if you follow the restrictions. You may need to plan for the entire four (4) weeks if your job cannot allow those restrictions.