

Newsletter issued by Forensic Nursing, Inc. At Your Service



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Irish toast

In the New Year, may your
right hand always be
stretched out in friendship,
never in want.

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What is carpal tunnel syndrome?

The median nerve travels from the forearm into your hand through a "tunnel" in your wrist. The bottom & sides of this tunnel are formed by wrist bones & the top of the tunnel is covered by a strong band of connective tissue called a ligament. This tunnel also contains 9 tendons that connect muscles to bones & bend your fingers & thumb. These tendons are covered with a lubricating membrane called synovium which may enlarge & swell under some circumstances. If the swelling is sufficient it may cause the median nerve to be pressed against this strong ligament which may result in numbness, tingling in your hand, clumsiness, or pain.

What causes it?

Most cases have no known cause. Some common causes & associated conditions are: repetitive & forceful grasping with hand; repetitive bending of wrist; broken or dislocated bones in wrist which produce swelling; arthritis, especially rheumatoid type; thyroid gland imbalance; sugar diabetes; hormonal changes with menopause; pregnancy.

What is the surgery?

Called a "release"---cutting the ligament that forms the roof of the carpal tunnel to relieve pressure on the median nerve.

Nerve Conduction Study [NCS]

Small metal disks /conduction gel attached to skin. Mild electric current is applied & muscles will twitch. This is done to see how quickly impulses travel *between* nerves. A waveform shows how fast or slow or... *absent* a nerve *fires or travels or doesn't fire or is absent*. Nerves make muscles work. If the nerve is damaged it will be reflected in the type of waveform. If the nerve is dead there will be no waveform.

Electromyography [EMG]

A fine needle is inserted into muscle....feels like a pinch. The needle allows the electrical activity in your muscles to be measured. No electrical current is applied with the needle. Waveforms appear on screen showing how well your nerves & muscles work.

---American Academy of Orthopedic Surgeons

Dystonia? What is it?

Involuntary muscle contractions or tremors. The contractions can force your body into unusual, sometimes painful, movements or positions. Dystonia can affect a specific part of your body like your neck, hand or vocal cords. Stress does not cause dystonia but *can increase* when you are tense, tired or, upset. **Primary dystonia:** genetic caused. **Secondary dystonia:** Conditions that produce neurological or physical condition & dystonia.

HEALTH

----*Infections passed on due to poor hospital hygiene* kill as many people in the U.S.---about 103,000 a year / as AIDS, breast cancer, & auto accidents combined.

----*What never to order in a fast-food restaurant.* A Florida middle school science student found that 70% of her local fast-food restaurants had more bacteria in their soft-drink ice than in the water from their toilet.

----*Burn more fat than top diet programs with a little help from a friend.* A new study revealed that owning & walking a dog can burn off more pounds---up to 14 annually, on average---than some of the top weight-loss programs.

Briefings The Week 2008