

Exercise Program for Carpal Tunnel Syndrome

If you have carpal tunnel syndrome, performing home exercises can help relieve pain and numbness and improve function in your hand and wrist.

There are 5 exercises in this program: Wrist Extension Stretch, Wrist Flexion Stretch, Median Nerve Glides, Tendon Glides (Series A and B), and Ball Squeezes.

Start each exercise slowly. A little discomfort is normal, but stop any exercise that causes pain.

Now, let's get started.

To do a wrist extension stretch: Straighten your affected arm and bend your wrist back as if signaling someone to "stop."

Use your other hand to gently pull back on your affected hand until you feel a stretch in your forearm.

Hold for 15 to 30 seconds, then relax.

Repeat 3 times.

To do a wrist flexion stretch: Straighten your affected arm and bend your wrist down so your fingers are pointing towards the floor.

Use your other hand to gently pull your affected hand toward your body until you feel a stretch in your forearm.

Hold for 15 to 30 seconds, then relax.

Repeat 3 times.

To do median nerve glides: Make a fist with your thumb outside your fingers. Straighten your fingers while keeping your thumb close to the side of your hand.

Keeping your fingers straight, bend your wrist backward toward your forearm.

Keeping your fingers and wrist in position, extend your thumb.

Keeping your fingers, wrist, and thumb extended, turn your forearm palm up.

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Keeping your fingers, wrist, and thumb extended, use your other hand to gently stretch your thumb.

Repeat 10 times.

To do tendon glides, series A: Hold your hand in front of you with your wrist and fingers fully straight.

Bend the tips of your fingers down so your knuckles are pointing up.

Make a tight fist with your thumb over your fingers.

Return to the start position and repeat 10 times.

To do tendon glides, series B: Hold your hand in front of you with your wrist and fingers fully straight.

Keeping your fingers straight, bend your hand at your bottom knuckle. Your hand should look like an upside down "L."

Bend your fingers down to touch your fingers to your palm.

Return to the start position and repeat 10 times.

To do a ball squeeze: Hold a rubber ball in your affected hand.

Keep your arm slightly bent with your palm toward the ceiling. Lift your hand higher than your heart. Squeeze and relax the ball.

Repeat 10 times.

Talk to your healthcare provider or physical therapist about these exercises and others to improve function in your hand and wrist.