

LITERALLY LOSING YOUR GRIP?



It might be carpal tunnel syndrome.

Think about all the times you use your fingers in a single day. If there is too much pressure on the median nerve in your wrist, you could develop a condition that makes it hard to use your fingers for all those everyday tasks — especially if you're a woman, a line worker, or you have diabetes or other diseases with potential to damage the nerves.* **This condition is called carpal tunnel syndrome. And it's more common than you'd think!**

What does carpal tunnel syndrome feel like?*

Carpal tunnel starts gradually with a frequent burning, numbness or tingly feeling in the palm of your hands and in your fingers, especially the thumb, and index and middle fingers. The symptoms often first appear in one or both hands during the night. You may wake up and want to “shake out” your hand or wrist. As it gets worse, you may begin to feel tingling during the day and it may get harder to form a fist, grip tightly or grasp small objects.

What causes it?

The symptoms you feel in your hands and fingers are actually caused by pressure on the median nerve in the carpal tunnel of your wrist. Swelling in your wrist can cause the tunnel to get squeezed and it pinches the nerve. There are a variety of issues that can cause this to happen.**

- Repeated use of vibrating hand tools
- Fluid retention during pregnancy or menopause
- Work stress
- Underactive thyroid gland
- Previous wrist injury, such as a sprain or a fracture
- Rheumatoid arthritis

Get it treated right away

Treatment can be as simple as a wrist splint or resting the hand. Or, for more serious cases, it could require surgery. If you're experiencing symptoms you should see a doctor as soon as you can. Proper precautions and early diagnosis can help prevent lasting damage to your hands and fingers.

Together, all the way.®



* National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke. “Carpal Tunnel Syndrome Fact Sheet.”

<https://www.ninds.nih.gov/Disorders/Patient-Caregiver-Education/Fact-Sheets/Carpal-Tunnel-Syndrome-Fact-Sheet> (published January 2017)

** WebMD. “What Are the Symptoms of Carpal Tunnel Syndrome?” <http://www.webmd.com/pain-management/carpal-tunnel/symptoms-of-carpal-tunnel-syndrome#1> (October 2, 2016).

This is intended to be general health information and not medical advice or services. Always consult with your doctor for appropriate examinations, treatment, testing and health care recommendations.

All Cigna products and services are provided exclusively by or through operating subsidiaries of Cigna Corporation, including Cigna Health and Life Insurance Company, Connecticut General Life Insurance Company, Cigna Behavioral Health, Inc., Cigna Health Management, Inc., and HMO or service company subsidiaries of Cigna Health Corporation. The Cigna name, logo, and other Cigna marks are owned by Cigna Intellectual Property, Inc.