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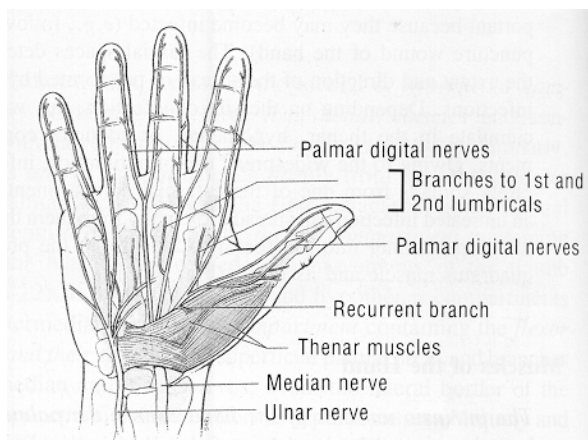
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"treating the cause of your problem, not just the symptoms"

Carpal Tunnel Syndrome

There are many occupations in today's society that involve repeated pinching movements of the fingers and bending of the wrist. It has been well documented that these repeated movements can cause a painful irritation of the hand and forearm.

When you are flexing your wrist, almost all the muscles involved in this movement are controlled by one main nerve. It is called the "median" nerve, and originates from the spinal cord in your neck. Commonly, problems arise as this nerve passes under the ligament that offers support to your wrist (the transverse carpal ligament) – see diagram. All the other nerves of the wrist pass over rather than under this ligament so they are not usually affected. The space through which this nerve passes is very small. Therefore, if your occupation requires you to be continually flexing your wrist (for example, cashiers or mechanics), the nerve can become "inflamed" or "entrapped" underneath this ligament. Fluid retention during pregnancy or menstruation can make the problem even worse.



The result of this "entrapped" nerve is a burning, prickling sensation in the hand or fingers. There may also be pain and weakness of the hand. Occasionally, the pain may extend up into the arm and shoulder region. People who have this problem will often complain that

their hand feels swollen, that it hurts while sleeping, or that the sensation of their hand has decreased. To them, it feels like they are “wearing a glove”.

This problem is known as “Carpal Tunnel Syndrome” and is treatable. For those people who have the syndrome, there are non-surgical forms of treatment that should be attempted first. For example, the chiropractic treatment for this usually includes, muscle stretching, ice, adjusting/manipulating the wrist joints, interferential current, splinting the wrist, and modifying your activities so the problem is not aggravated further. One other possible cause of the symptoms of carpal tunnel may be a problem with your neck. Again, this is where the nerves that pass through the wrist originate. A pinching or irritation of the nerves in the neck may cause the same symptoms to be felt in the hand and wrist.

If you have any further questions, feel free to email or call my office.