



Ultrasound Guided Carpal Tunnel Release Protocol

The ultrasound guided carpal tunnel release procedure allows what was once major surgery to be performed quickly through a small incision. Although post-procedure care will be tailored to fit your individual needs, the following guidelines are designed to help you and your physical therapist after the procedure.

Things to Avoid Before and After Your Procedure

- Anti-inflammatory medicine like ibuprofen (Advil™, Motrin™) and naproxen (Aleve™, Naprosyn™) can be used as needed
- Alcohol: Avoid 48 hours before your procedure. Do not consume alcohol while you are taking prescription pain medication.
- Tobacco & nicotine: Consider talking to your physician or health care provider about stopping. These products impair your ability to heal and might reduce the beneficial effects of the procedure.
- Diet: There is no need to fast before the procedure. You may eat normal meals before your procedure and resume your regular diet when you feel able. A well-balanced diet will promote healing. If you are interested in more details, we can arrange a consultation with our dietician.

Post-Operative Wrist Care Timeline

Day 1 (day of your procedure)

- Plan to have a family member or friend drive you home after your procedure.
- Activity restrictions: Rest today.
- Rehab: Protect your Wrist by resting and keeping it elevated to reduce swelling.

Day 2-7

- Activity restrictions: You may lift up to 5 lbs. As you are comfortable, you may begin non-repetitive use of hand (like using it to groom, dress, eat and drive short distances). No sustained gripping like opening a jar.
- Rehab: Start gentle wrist, elbow and shoulder range of motion exercises and perform 3-5 times per day.

Week 2

- Activity restrictions: You may lift up to 10 lbs.
- Begin Nerve Glide Exercises, begin strengthening exercises

Week 3

- Activity restrictions: Progress as tolerated.
- Rehab: Continue range of motion exercises. Progress to wrist and elbow isotonic strengthening with dumbbell wrist extension and flexion (start with 2 lb dumbbell and progress as tolerated)

Discomfort

Some pain after your procedure is expected for the first few weeks. In some cases, the pain is slightly worse during the first week or two following the procedure. This is a part of the natural inflammatory and healing response. During the first 3 days post-procedure, apply ice for 15-20 minutes 3 times daily. Thereafter, you may ice as desired or directed by your care team. In some circumstances your care team may prescribe pain medicine. If you are concerned about your pain, please contact your care team. \

Bracing

- Wear your carpal tunnel brace for 3 days very loose
- Wear your carpal tunnel brace at night for 4 weeks post-procedure

Dressing

- Remove dressing after 24-48 hours. Replace with simple bandage.
 - Keep ACE wrap or compression sleeve on for 2 days. It should be snug, but not tight. If you see swelling in your fingers, the compression is too tight.
 - Sterile strip bandages can be removed when they begin peeling off or after 7 days. Keep bandages and procedure area clean and dry.
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Bathing

Do not soak/submerge the elbow in water for 1 week. Showering is OK.

Follow-up Appointment

You will be scheduled for follow-up appointments approximately 2 weeks and 6 weeks after your procedure. In some circumstances, a care team member may follow-up with you over the telephone or electronically. If you have questions about your appointments, call 301-493-8884.

When to call your provider

If you notice increasing redness, warmth, pain, fever, drainage from the wound or other problems that concern you, call 301-493-8884 during normal clinic hours. Otherwise seek care at your local emergency room.