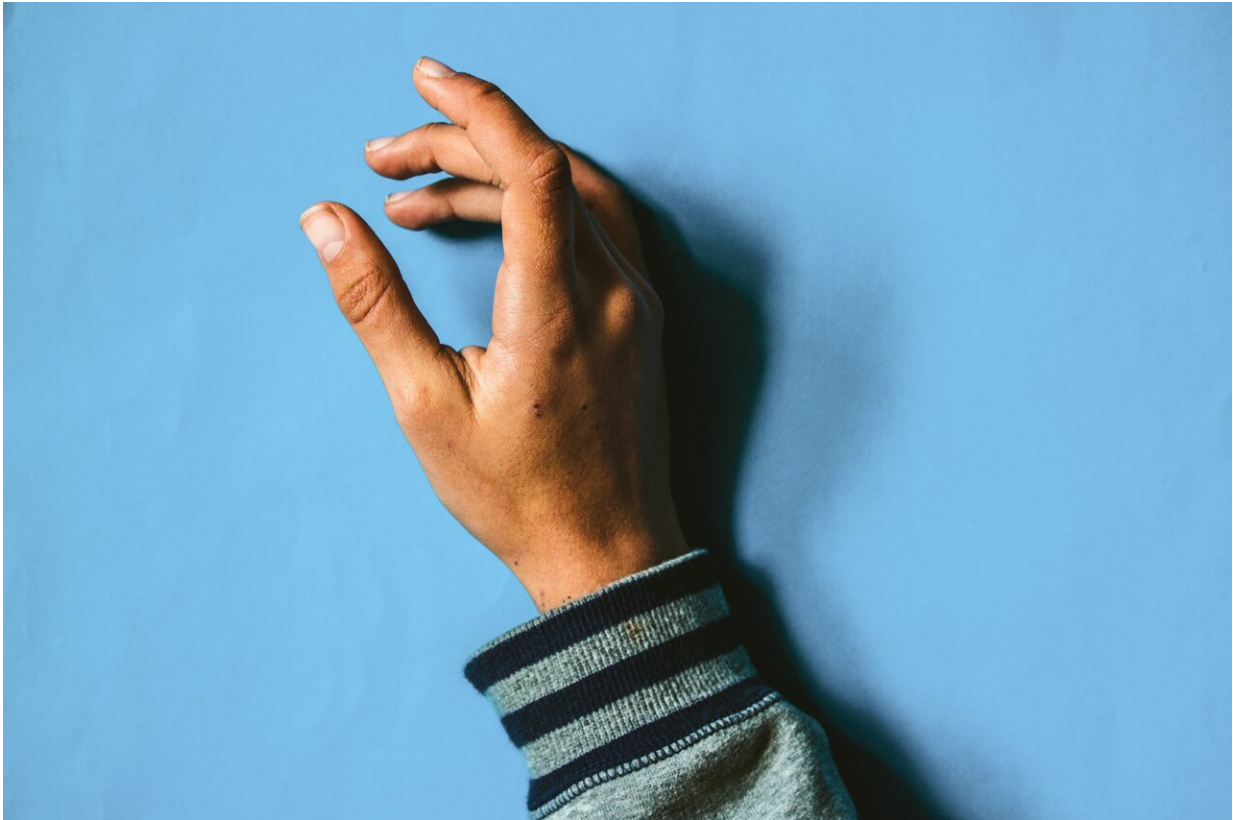


Find relief for achy hands and wrists

June 15 2021, by Debra Bourne



Credit: Unsplash/CC0 Public Domain

Peripheral nerves connect your brain and spinal cord to the rest of your body. The peripheral nerves in your arms and hands allow you to move and to feel.

But if those nerves become injured, you might start to experience the

sensation of "pins and needles" and other unpleasant symptoms.

Here are the basics of [peripheral nerves](#) injuries, including some specific details on the most common type of this injury, [carpal tunnel syndrome](#).

There are a few types of peripheral nerve injuries:

- **Compression**—This happens when you have pressure on your nerve. Some examples include carpal tunnel syndrome and cubital tunnel syndrome.
- **Trauma**—This could be something like a significant cut. The sooner we can get that repaired, the sooner the nerves can start regenerating.

For trauma injuries, it's important to be evaluated early. For example, let's say you have a cut in your forearm that needs stitches. The nerves across the repair site are made up of little cables that have to regenerate from where it's sewn back together all the way back to the hand. They regenerate very slowly—only an inch per month.

Carpal tunnel syndrome is one of the most common peripheral nerve injuries. Typical symptoms of carpal tunnel syndrome include:

- **Night pain**—This means you wake up in the middle of the night to shake your hand because it's gone numb.
- **Numbness in the fingers**—All fingers except the pinky are affected.
- **Weakness in the hand**—You might notice that you start dropping objects more frequently.

Risk factors for carpal tunnel include:

- Having diabetes.

- Being female, particularly during pregnancy.
- Using vibratory tools, like jackhammers.

Although it's a commonly held belief, using a keyboard is not actually shown to cause carpal tunnel syndrome.

What treatment options are available for carpal tunnel syndrome?

The first line of treatment is to wear braces at night. This helps keep the wrist in a neutral position. Steroid injections might also help.

If carpal tunnel symptoms persist, surgery is recommended. The surgery is an outpatient procedure, and recovery takes about a month. Surgeons make a small incision in the palm, and then open up the [carpal tunnel](#) so that the [nerve](#) no longer has pressure on it.

Provided by University of Kentucky

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