

## CARPEL TUNNEL RELEASE

### ABOUT THE PROCEDURE

Carpal tunnel syndrome is a condition in which your median nerve – one of the major nerves that controls the functioning of the hand and fingers – becomes compressed inside a “tunnel” in the wrist.

When you bend your wrist forward or backwards, you make this space smaller. In some people, this tightening can cause pressure or squeezing on the nerve and its blood supply, causing numbness or tingling in the fingers and hand.

Many people who have carpal tunnel syndrome have symptoms for many years without realizing it. Symptoms tend to appear gradually and include:

- Numbness, tingling, or burning sensations in the hands or wrists.
- Weakness or clumsiness in the hand.
- Difficulty performing routine tasks with the hands such as holding a cup, talking on the phone or even driving.
- Pain or numbness in the hand that wakes you up a night.

Often carpal tunnel can be the result of chronic repetitive movements common in very manual jobs.

### POST-OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS

- The average time off work is 6-weeks.
- Call my office to make an appointment 2 week after surgery.
- During the first 2 weeks you need to avoid tight gripping and flexing or extending the wrist.
- You can wash the hand 2 days after surgery.
- Don't do any activity that increases your blood pressure for 6 weeks.

- If you are having pain post-op, use Tylenol extra strength. If you need something more, please call my office or see your family doctor.
- Apply ointment to wound and rewrap with Band-aid and tensor wrap for the first 2 weeks.
- Massaging scars postoperatively 3 times a day for 10 minutes with firm strokes along the line using ointment to lubricate.
- You will not need antibiotics post-operative.
- All the stitches are dissolving and will be absorbed on their own.
- If dressing feels too tight or loose at any time post-operatively, please adjust.
- If dressing falls off or becomes soiled, please remove and replace with new dressing.
- Bleeding in area should be controlled with pressure for 20 minutes – if persistent go to the hospital emergency room.
- Any spreading redness outside edges of the wound should be looked at by myself or your family doctor.

### COMMON POST-OPERATIVE EXPERIENCES

- Burning or itchiness around surgical site is normal.
- Bruising and swelling are normal and may spread down arm but will settle in a few weeks.
- Night pain tends to improve right away but weakness and tingling can take much longer.
- After around 2 weeks, the stitches begin to fall out.

### OUTCOME

- See general post-op instructions.