

Carpal tunnel syndrome, also known as CTS, is a common condition of the hand, whereby, for reasons not yet fully explained, the median nerve of the hand becomes increasingly compressed and limited in its function.

The symptoms of CTS are pain in the hand during the night, accompanied by a feeling of numbness in the thumb, index and middle fingers. The problem may be initially relieved by non-surgical treatments such as exercises to shake out the hand, a splint to immobilise the wrist or cortisone injections into the carpal tunnel. If symptoms persist, a neurological examination will be undertaken to assess nerve conduction speed. Then, depending on the outcome of this test, surgical intervention may also be considered as an option.

The procedure may be performed under regional anaesthetic. The compressed nerve is released via a five centimetre long incision made between the thumb and the base of the little finger. We recommend spending a night in the clinic after this operation. The hand should also be rested for about four weeks following surgery. Post-operative pain is usually quick to abate, although a feeling of numbness in the fingers may persist for a while, depending on how long the patient has had the syndrome.