

Ulnar Tunnel Syndrome

What is it?

A chronic condition resulting in increased pressure on the ulnar nerve

What causes it?

Overuse of muscles and tendons of the forearm. Direct and sudden trauma to the ulnar nerve within the ulnar tunnel. Abnormal growth in the wrist, eg cyst.

Symptoms

Inflammation, pain, weakness, loss of sensation and muscle weakness in the hand, particularly in the little finger, the side of the hand and the outer forearm. Inability to grip.

Top Tips

Immobilise and Implement adaptive behaviours as soon as possible. Review repetitive stresses place upon forearm, wrist and hand to obtain equipment, which may alleviate symptoms.

How to Treat it

Immobilise at elbow, wrist and hand/finger. Stop activities and actions which are causing irritation and injury. Introduce adaptive behaviours and ergonomic equipment. Avoid putting pressure on ulnar nerve and holding elbow in bent position. Painkillers. Anti-inflammatories.



Rehab

Use of supports/splints. Strengthening and stretching exercises for forearm, wrist and hand. Surgery may be required to remove any abnormal growth.

Definitions

Chronic – gradual and cumulative injury over time

Ulnar nerve – one of three main nerves in arm, running from neck down to hand

Tendon – an inflexible, inelastic strong fibrous tissue connecting muscle to bone

Cyst – abnormal sac or cavity containing fluid

Ulnar tunnel – compression of ulnar nerve at the wrist

Ergonomic equipment – furniture, tools or equipment designed for comfortable and effective use during activity

Associated Conditions

- Wrist Sprain
- Carpal Tunnel Syndrome (CTS)
- Wrist Ganglion Cyst
- Wrist Tendinitis

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