

Carpal Tunnel Release - Recovery Guide

Discharge

You will be discharged on the day of surgery.

Dressing

Your bandage dressing can be removed on day 1 after your operation. Leave the adhesive dressings intact until your review appointment at 2-3 weeks. The dressings are water resistant. Showering is fine but please keep your dressings relatively dry until your post op appointment.

Swelling

To help reduce swelling in your hand, it may be necessary to keep your hand elevated while you sleep for the first 24-48 hours.

If you notice redness around the wound or experience a fever, please contact our office immediately or see your local doctor. For after-hours concerns, you can also reach out to the hospital emergency department.

Pain Relief / Medications

In general you should take paracetamol regularly for the first 24 hours, followed by anti-inflammatories if required. Cease these medications as soon as the pain allows.

Dr Robinson recommends taking Vitamin C 1000-1500 mg daily from 2 days prior to surgery until at least 3 weeks post surgery.

Post-Operative Appointments

2-3 weeks: Your post op clinic review. A nurse will remove your dressing and review your wound.

Return to Work / Driving

A reasonable goal for returning to office work is within 1-2 weeks. For more physically demanding jobs, the target is typically greater than 6 weeks. Driving can usually be resumed the day after surgery.

Return to Activities guide

Running: within 1 week

Swimming: once your wound has healed

Tennis: 6 weeks

Golf: 6 weeks

Avoid vibrational tools (sander, grinder, mower) for 6 weeks

[Physical therapy guide](#)

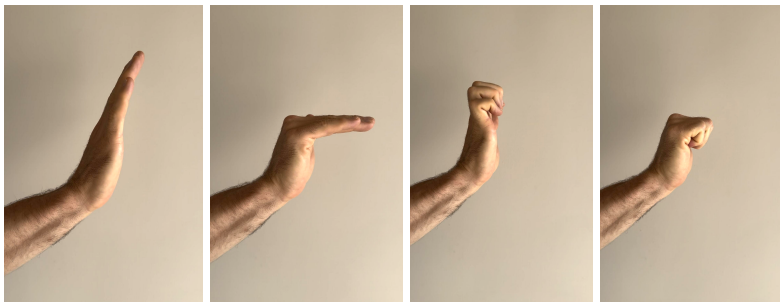
Physical therapy can be commenced the day after surgery. Let your activity be guided by your pain, **do not continue any exercises that are painful**. Please note these exercises are a guide only, and you may be directed to a more specific program by your physio or hand therapist.

Begin these exercises the day after surgery, performing them 5-10 times per session, aiming for 3-5 sessions per day.

[Tendon gliding \(preview here\)](#)

Tendon gliding exercises help restore the range of motion in your hands and fingers. Start with your hand extended and fingers upright, touching each other. Then, proceed with the following steps:

- Bend your fingers at the base knuckles (bottom knuckles) to a 90-degree angle while keeping the other fingers straight and together.
- Bend your middle knuckles while keeping the tips of your fingers straight.
- Bend your fingers at the top knuckles to form a fist.
- Straighten your base knuckles and open your hand back to the starting position.



[Wrist flexion and extension \(preview here\)](#)

Wrist bends improve flexibility and help break up scar tissue.

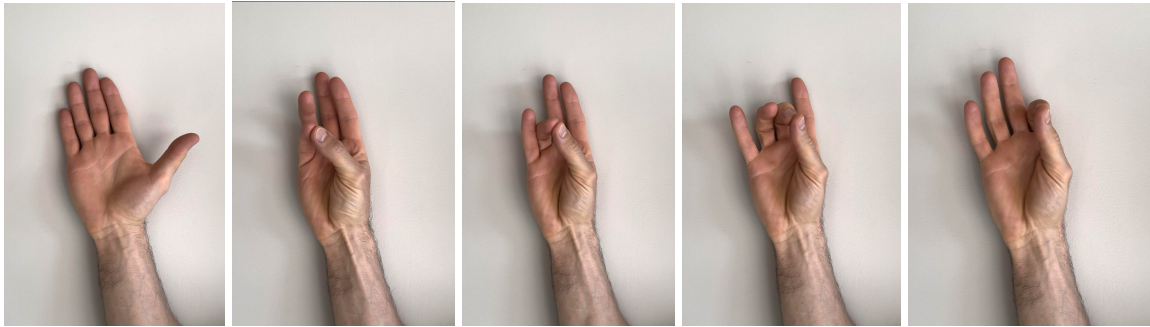
- Extend your arm with your wrist straight and palm facing down.
- Flex your hand up to the ceiling, and then let it drop downward to the floor.
- A more advanced option is to use your other hand to gently pull your wrist back by your fingers, holding the stretch for 10-30 seconds.



[Thumb opposition \(preview here\)](#)

Thumb-finger touches enhance coordination for tasks such as picking up small objects. Hold your hand open and touch each fingertip to your thumb, starting with the index finger and moving to the pinky, then reverse the order.

Complete this exercise 3-5 times in each direction.



[Nerve flossing exercise \(preview here\)](#)

Straighten your arm out with your finger and wrist extended, then gently fold them across to touch the opposite armpit.

Repeat 10 times, 3 times per day.

