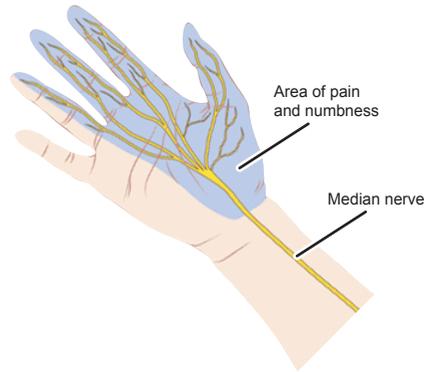


Occupational Therapy for Carpal Tunnel Syndrome



What is Carpel Tunnel Syndrome?

Carpal Tunnel Syndrome (CTS) is a common condition that affects the use of the hand as a result of the compression of the median nerve at the wrist. Prolonged use of the fingers or frequent bending of the wrist can cause soft tissue inflammation that result in compression on the median nerve.



Signs and Symptoms of CTS

Sensory

- Numbness
- Coldness
- Tingling
- Pain

Motor

- Stiffness
- Weakness of the hand and thumb
- Reduced muscle mass in the thumb
- Difficulty in holding or pinching items

What causes Carpel Tunnel Syndrome?

It can be caused by excessive use of the hand in activities involving the following:

- Rapid or forceful finger movements
- Repetitive forceful gripping of objects with the fingers (e.g. when using screwdrivers or power drills)
- Repetitive wrist movements
- Prolonged awkward wrist movements
- Prolonged firm grip or pressure on the palm
- Handling cold items at work
- Prolonged use of tools with vibration

The role of Occupational Therapy

Your occupational therapist aims to assist you in improving your ability to perform daily tasks by:

A. Fitting you with custom-made splints to rest your affected hand

Wearing a wrist brace or splint will encourage neutral wrist positioning to prevent compression and stretching of median nerve.



B. Educating you on activity modification techniques to allow the affected hand to rest and recover

Your occupational therapist will advise you on the principles of activity modification. By applying these, you can start modifying the way you use your hands. Doing so will reduce the intensity and frequency of symptoms by resting the surrounding soft tissue, hence preventing compression and stretching of the median nerve.

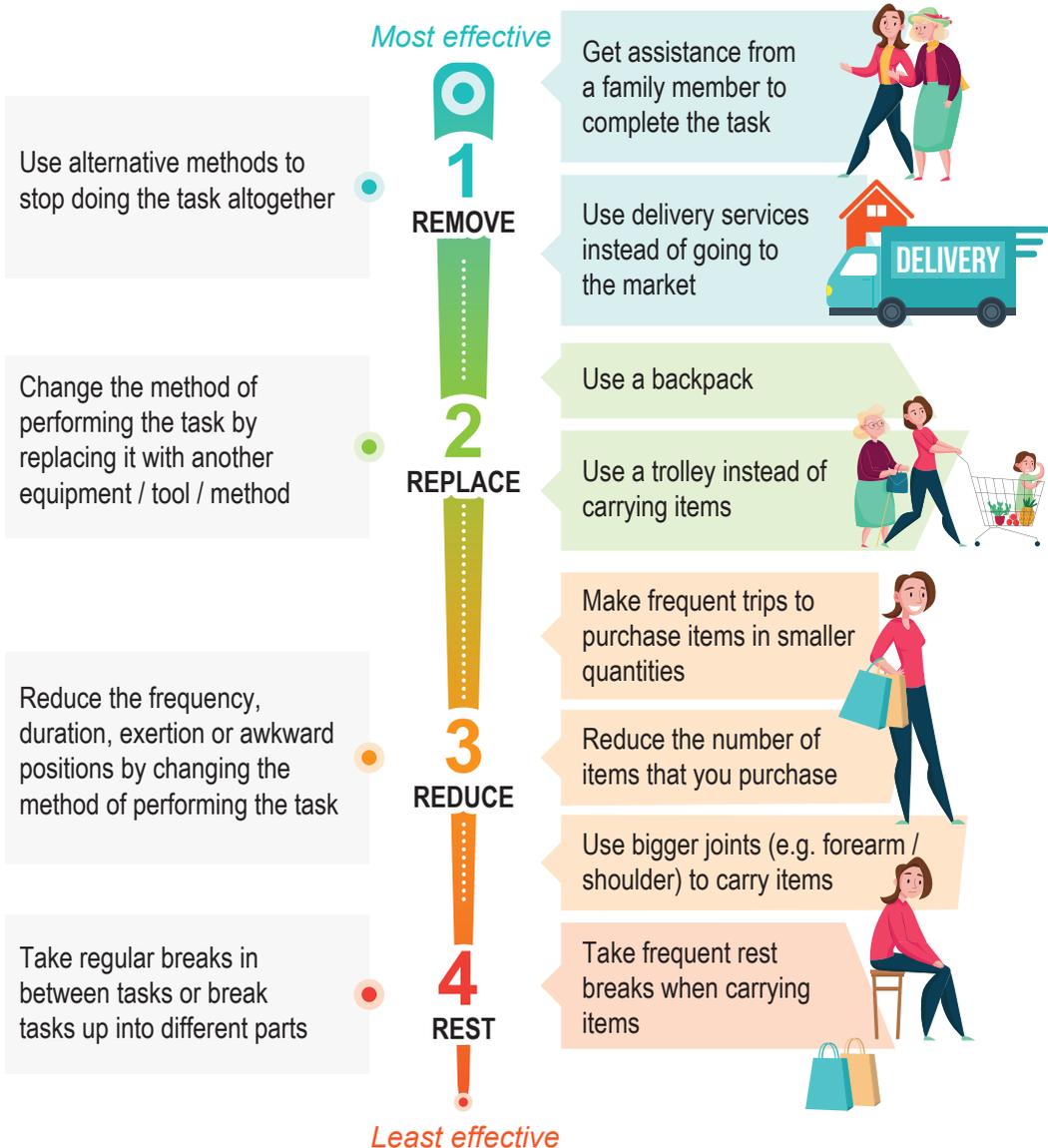
C. Teaching you exercises to facilitate gliding of the median nerve

Principles of Activity Modification

Identify and reflect on daily activities that involve awkward wrist positioning or forceful gripping. You may use the following principles of activity modification to identify solutions which can prevent aggravation of symptoms.



Apply these principles in grocery shopping as a reference:



Tips on Office Ergonomics

When using the keyboard:



- Avoid resting palm of hands on the table
- Avoid resting wrist over the edge of the table



- Ensure wrist is in a neutral straight position
- Use an ergonomic keyboard or split keyboard when necessary to ensure good wrist position
- Reduce force when striking keys on keyboard



When using a mouse:

- Use one of a suitable size to prevent excessive gripping
- Alternate between right and left hand if prolonged clicking on mouse is required
- Use an anti-pronation mouse when necessary to avoid resting palm on the table



**Activity modification for management of
Carpal Tunnel Syndrome**



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The information provided in this publication is meant purely for educational purposes and may not be used as a substitute for medical diagnosis or treatment. You should seek the advice of your Occupational Therapist if you have any questions related to the information provided. Information is correct at time of printing (November 2021) and subject to revision without prior notice.

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