

MoveWell WIPE-OUT®
CARPAL TUNNEL SYNDROME



STEMS

Sit to the front of your chair with your back straight and chest up tall. Lightly cross your arms in front by grabbing the opposite elbow (like a genie). Do the following 6x each:
 Lift your arms over your head and then lower them down.
 Lift your arms over your head and bend from side to side.
 Lift your arms over your head and turn right and left.



Backstroke

Stand with feet shoulder width apart, toes straight ahead, knees unlocked. Circle your right arm back like you are swimming the back stroke. Keep your eyes focused forward. You should see your left shoulder come under your chin. Repeat with your left arm. Perform 3 x 12 repetitions.



Wall Wash

Stand facing wall with washcloths in each hand at chest level. Perform each of the following for 12-15 repetitions:
 I. Alternately reach each arm up as you shift your weight to that side
 II. Move arms out to the side at chest level
 III. Move arms in an "X" pattern (one arm up and one arm down), return to center and repeat to the other side.



Downward Dog

Assume a four-point position. With shoulders over hands and back straight curl the toes under while lifting the hips up and back as you straighten the legs. Breathe in the pose while allowing your head to hang in a relaxed position and attempting to bring the heels to the floor. Hold for 30 seconds before returning to hands and knees. Repeat 3 times.



Warrior II

Stand with your feet wider than shoulder width apart and toes pointed straight ahead. Turn your R foot to the R and lower your pelvis to the floor by bending the R knee until your thigh is parallel to the floor. Keep pelvis facing forward. Press your feet apart as if you are trying to split the floor. Gaze over your R middle finger and take 5 deep breaths.



Triangle

Stand with your feet 3-4' apart, toes pointed straight ahead. Arms out to a "T". Keeping your belly facing forward, inhale and turn your right foot to the right. Exhale and bring your right hand towards the right big toe while the left hand points up towards the ceiling. Inhale and look up towards the ceiling. Take 5 deep breaths in this position. Return to the upright position. Repeat to the left side.

What is a Carpal Tunnel Syndrome?

Carpal Tunnel Syndrome is an overuse injury to the wrist, where the median nerve gets compressed as it passes through the carpal tunnel. The carpal tunnel is a narrow passageway through the wrist that encompasses many muscles, tendons, and nerves. This area is very tightly compact, and inflammation can cause burning, weakness of the grip, and pain in the thumb and first three fingers.

The Why Behind the What

Exercise #1 - STEMS

S.T.E.M.S. are great for opening up the upper spine and increasing rotation in this area. If movement happens in the spine, less strain has to happen in the wrist, and this can decrease pain in the area. This exercise only takes a few seconds to complete, and is easy to do when you start to feel any irritation in the hand or wrist.

Exercise #2 - Backstroke

This exercise activates the lower trapezius muscles in the back, as well as increasing rotation in the upper spine. This will help to reset the position of the shoulder blade so that posture is better and the muscles of the shoulder and arm can start in the right position.

Exercise #3 - Wall Wash

This exercise works on activating the lower trapezius muscles in order to place the shoulder blade in its proper position and stretches the muscles in the lower back. All of this helps to improve posture to take pressure off of the muscles of the hand and wrist.

The Common Causes of Carpal Tunnel Syndrome

Carpal tunnel syndrome can be caused by an elevated shoulder, a shoulder that sits too far forward, or a lack of rotation in the upper spine and rib area. The key for fixing carpal tunnel syndrome is to get the shoulder and shoulder blade back to the correct position and take pressure off the compressed nerve.

Exercise #4 - Downward Dog

This is a great stretch for the hamstrings and the muscles of the calf. This stretch teaches the muscles that they need to work in a long position, and we all know that muscles only learn the lessons we teach them! This pose also activates the lower trapezius muscle, which helps to pull down the shoulder blade and take pressure off the nerves that run through the arm and into the wrist.

Exercise #5 - Warrior II

This exercise is a great one for waking up the glutes and strengthening the quads. When the glutes are working, they take some of the pressure off the smaller muscles in the arm, which get inflamed and put pressure on the nerves in the carpal tunnel when overworked.

Exercise #6 - Triangle

The triangle pose improves flexibility of the innermost hamstring on the front leg, while stretching the muscles in the lower back. It also encourages rotation and extension in the upper spine, which many people lose due to poor posture. Poor posture is one of the causes of nerve pinching in the carpal tunnel.