

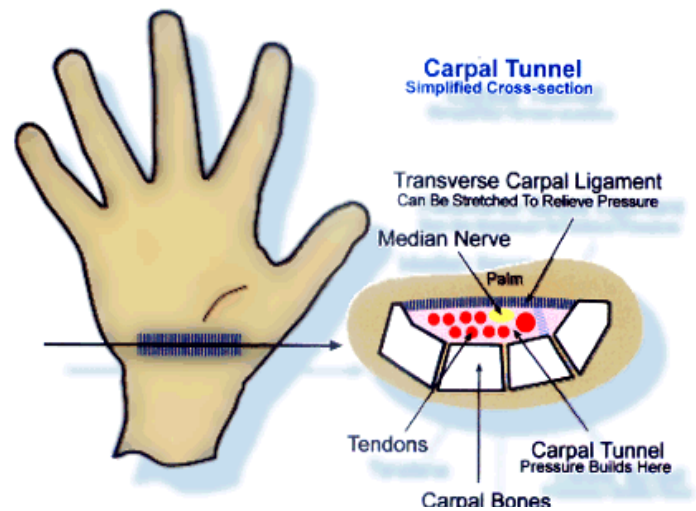
# Wrist & Elbow Problems

## Carpal Tunnel Syndrome

### What are the Symptoms?

- Tightness, discomfort, stiffness, soreness or burning in the hands, wrists, fingers, fore-arms, or elbows
- Tingling, coldness, or numbness in the hands
- Clumsiness or loss of strength and coordination in the hands
- Pain that wakes you up at night
- Feeling a need to massage your hands, wrists, and arms

**Pain in the upper back, shoulders, or neck associated with using the computer.**



Carpal tunnel syndrome (CTS) is one becoming one of the more prevalent occupational injuries in the workplace which then carries over into our daily recreational activities as well. CTS can occur due to obesity, repetitive strain injuries, pregnancy and other health issues. All of these conditions decrease the space of the carpal tunnel (see picture) and add pressure to the structures that pass within it.

### The 'Funny Bone'

The 'Funny Bone' is not a bone at all, but rather the ulnar nerve, which runs along the outer edge of the elbow. This nerve is close to the surface of the skin, and even a minor blow can cause sharp pain and tingling. The sensation usually subsides after a few seconds.

The ultimate goal is to control the pain, and restore mobility of the joint. Massage, ART, chiropractic and acupuncture can all aid in achieving such goals.

Cumulatively they work together to reduce the inflammation, pressure, muscle tightness, adhesions and increase joint stability.

## What is Olecranon Bursitis?

Olecranon bursitis causes fluid to collect in a sac that lies behind the elbow, called the olecranon bursa. A bursa is a slippery, sac-like tissue that normally allows smooth movement around bony prominences, such as the point behind the elbow. When a bursa becomes inflamed for some reason, the sac fills with inflammatory fluid. This can cause pain and a noticeable swelling behind the

elbow.

Olecranon Bursitis may follow a traumatic accident, such as a fall onto the back of the elbow, or it may seemingly pop up out of nowhere. People who rest their elbows on hard surfaces may aggravate the condition and make the swelling more prominent.

# Golfer's Elbow

Golfer's elbow is an inflammation of the inside of the elbow where the flexor muscles of the forearm attach to the bone at the wrist. This condition is most often caused by overuse or repetitive movements such as that of a golf swing. Tenderness is felt at the elbow and is most often present when the wrist is bent forward.

Massage therapy will aid in decreasing the inflammation and reducing irritating adhesions. Other benefits include the reduction of muscle spasms, increased range of motion, and circulation. Long term aims include eliminating scar tissue within the tendon and restoring strength to the affected muscle. Recurrences may be prevented by addressing any perpetuating factors.

## How can you prevent this:

**STRETCHING!** One of the most important things that you can do is to try and elongate the muscle fibers so that adhesions do not form around the tissue.

**ICE**—if you feel that the area is hot, or painful to touch it is probably inflamed and the best way to relieve this is by putting an ice pack on for about 15 minutes.

## BACK 2 HEALTH

Back to Health Wellness Centre  
240 Catherine St. Suite 100  
Ottawa, Ontario  
K2P 2G8

Phone: (613) 237-3306  
Fax: (613) 237-3100  
E-mail:  
Dr.Rodwin@Back2Health4you.

Dr. Barbara Rodwin B.Sc., D.C.,  
D.Acu, A.R.T.  
Keri-Lyn Dudgeon B.Sc.(H.K.)

Trevor Nootenboom R.M.T., A.R.T.  
Rina McNairn R.M.T., A.R.T.  
Jenny Wolfram B.P.H.E., R.M.T.,  
A.R.T.  
Ken Flannery-Fleck R.M.T., A.R.T.  
Lee-Ann Solomon R.M.T.  
Jeffrey King R.M.T., A.R.T.  
Erin Whyte R.M.T., A.R.T.

# Repetitive Motion Injuries

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Repetitive motion injuries develop over time and are often the result of computer work, assembly line tasks, or other tasks which require the repetitive use of the arms and hands. One example of a repetitive motion injury is 'trigger finger,' a form of tendinitis brought on by repeatedly grasping an object. This condition is an inflammation of the flexor tendon in any of the fingers (including the thumb). This swelling makes it difficult for the flexor tendon to glide easily through the tendon sheath which surrounds it. As a result, there may be a popping or clicking sensation when moving the finger. At times the finger locks in a curled position.

## Wrist Flexion exercises:

Top - while holding hand straight, bend wrist down as shown.

Bottom - Lay hand on a flat surface and extend upward.

