

If you are still struggling after following this advice you can directly contact the Obstetrics and Gynaecology Physiotherapy Team on:

0151 430 1890 at Whiston Hospital

01744 646 304 at St Helens Hospital

You can also speak to your Midwife, Consultant or GP about being referred for Physiotherapy.

Whiston Hospital
Warrington Road,
Prescot,
Merseyside, L35 5DR
Telephone: 0151 426 1600

St Helens Hospital
Marshall Cross Road,
St Helens, Merseyside,
WA9 3DA
Telephone: 01744 26633

Carpal Tunnel Syndrome in Pregnancy

This leaflet can be made available
in alternative languages / formats on request.

如有需要，本传单可提供其他语言/版式
此單張的其他語言/格式版本可按要求提供

Na żądanie ta ulotka może zostać udostępniona
w innych językach/formatach.

What is carpal tunnel syndrome in pregnancy

Carpal tunnel syndrome (CTS) can be a common occurrence during pregnancy. It is a result of you having more fluid in the body during pregnancy and this then results in a build up of pressure on the nerves in the hand and wrist.

Some of the symptoms you may experience are:

- Discomfort, throbbing or pain in the palm of your hand, thumb, fingers and wrist
- Swelling in the hand, thumb and fingers
- Your hand feeling weak when you try and grip (caution due to risk of dropping objects) and extra care when driving
- Numbness in the hand, thumb and fingers. This may also be felt in the forearm (show caution if handling hot or cold objects)
- Tingling or pins and needles in the hand, thumb and fingers
- Cramping can sometimes occur
- Symptoms can feel worse during the night and in the morning
- Redness and increase in skin temperature

Symptoms can vary and can effect one or both hands. CTS can not harm your baby. Symptoms usually resolve shortly after you give birth.

Management of symptoms

There are several things you can do to try and manage your symptoms while you are pregnant:

- Try not to overuse/repetitively use your hands and avoid carrying heavy shopping bags for any length of time
- Try to elevate hands when able to encourage drainage of the excess fluid, especially before bedtime. You can prop your arm up on cushions to elevate while resting to help with circulation
- You can try using ice/cold or alternatively try switching hot to cold for contrast (take caution with numbness when using hot and cold, ensure you wrap the heat in something and do not leave on skin for more than 60 seconds at a time) you can try this several times a day if you find it helpful
- Regularly exercising your hand/wrist can help, such as:
 1. Making a fist and stretching open your fingers
 2. Moving your hand up and down at the wrist
 3. Touching your thumb to each finger
 4. With your elbows bent, turning the palms of your hand to face the ceiling and then down towards the floor
 5. Bending and straightening your arm

(try to aim to do these 10 times every hour)

You may be provided with splints to wear at night, you can also wear these during the day but will need to remove regularly and exercise your hand and wrist as described above.

Never wear splints for driving.