



What is carpal tunnel syndrome?

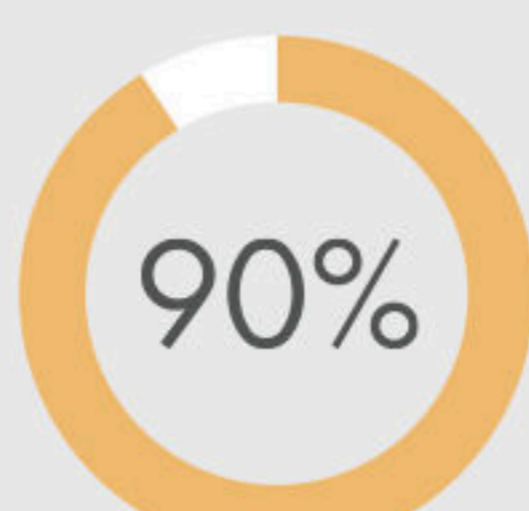
Many office workers spend long hours performing repetitive tasks at their computer desks. This activity can cause carpal tunnel syndrome, a painful and sometimes disabling condition forcing afflicted employees to take substantial amounts of time off.



Some Statistics



One in ten workers are diagnosed with Carpal Tunnel Syndrome.



At least 90% of workers use their computers daily.



Women are three times more likely to acquire Carpal Tunnel Syndrome than men.

Causes



1 A typing speed of 40 words per minute exerts 16 tons of force on your hands each eight hour workday.



2 Excessive video games or aggressive controller use can lead to CTS; Limiting playtime can help mitigate effects.



3 Power tools that vibrate or shake with use could lead to CTS without careful use.



4 Repetitive actions like chopping or stirring food can strain the wrist and may lead to CTS.



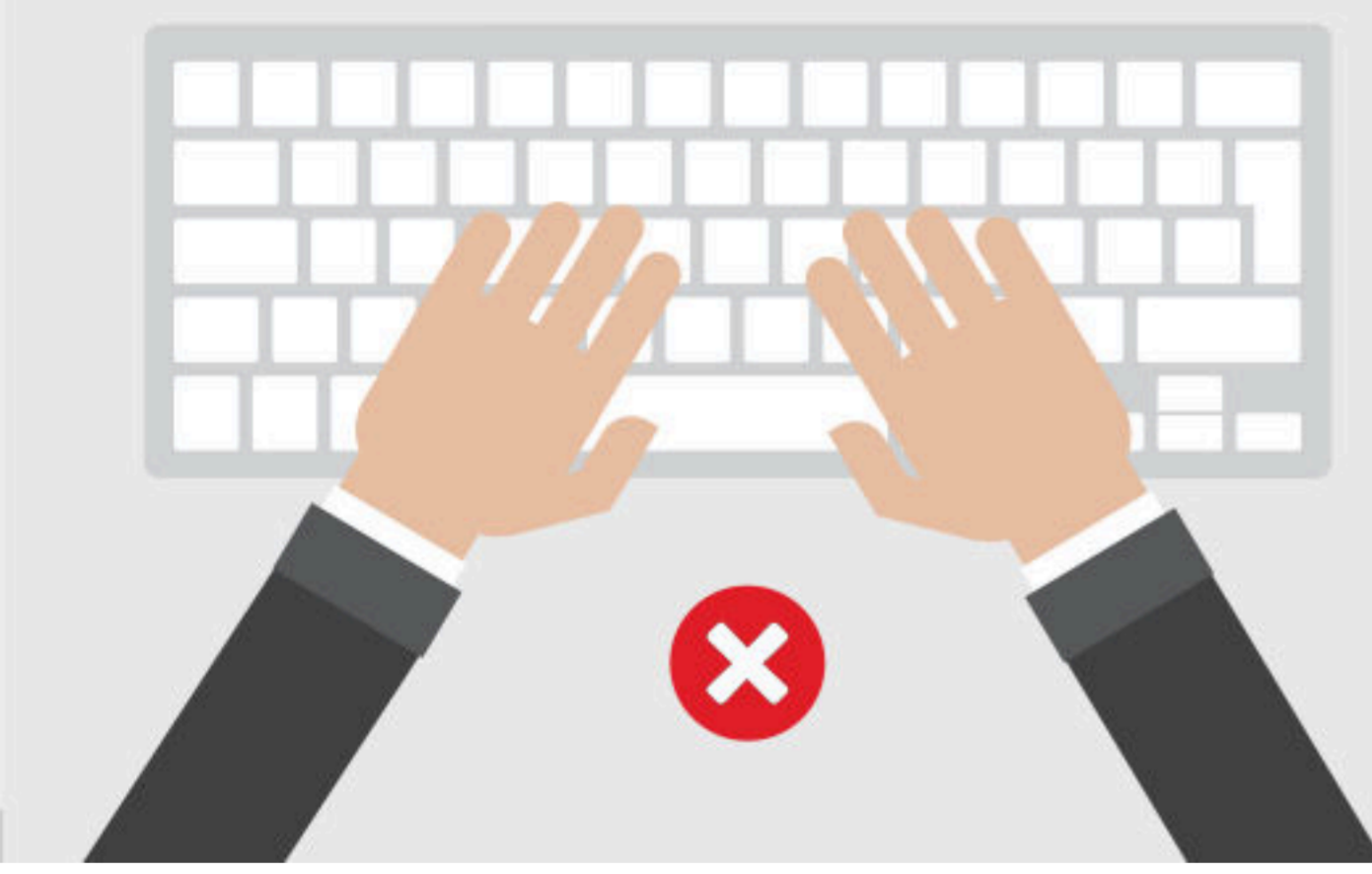
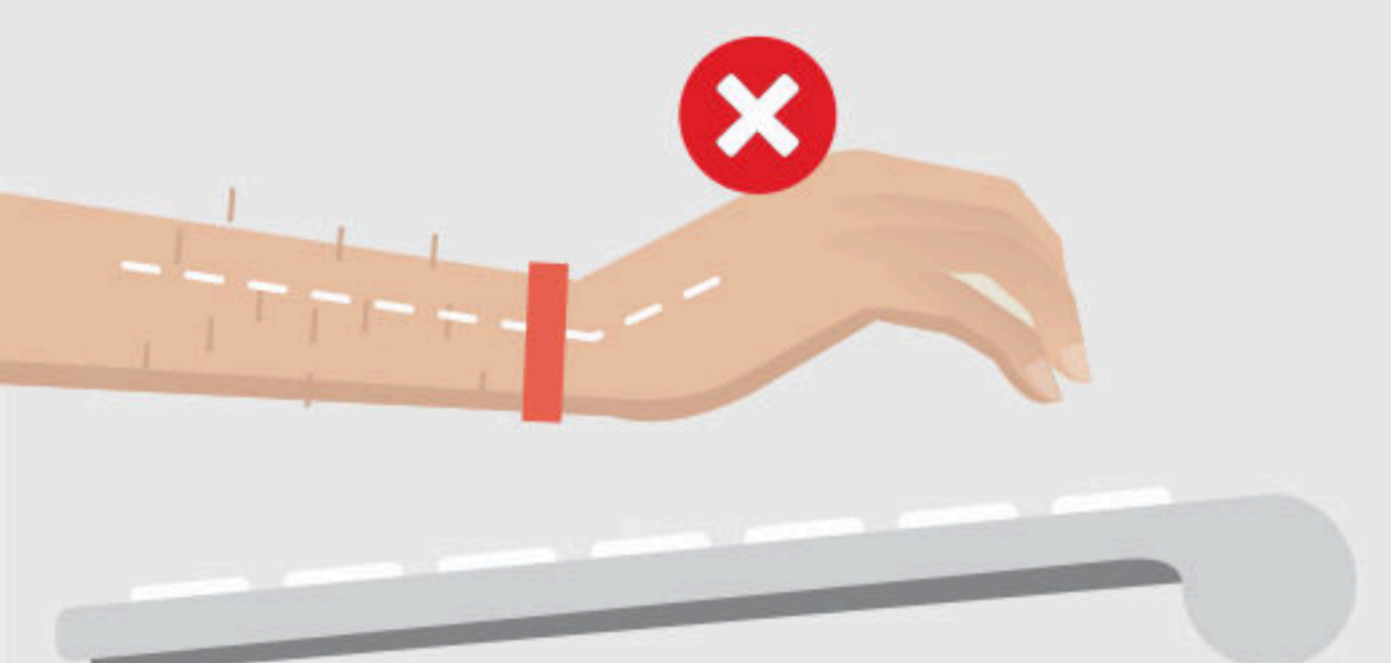
5 Yardwork like pulling weeds with your hands can bring about symptoms of CTS, especially in the elderly.



6 Unbalanced nutritional or deficits like vitamins, amino acids, minerals, enzymes.

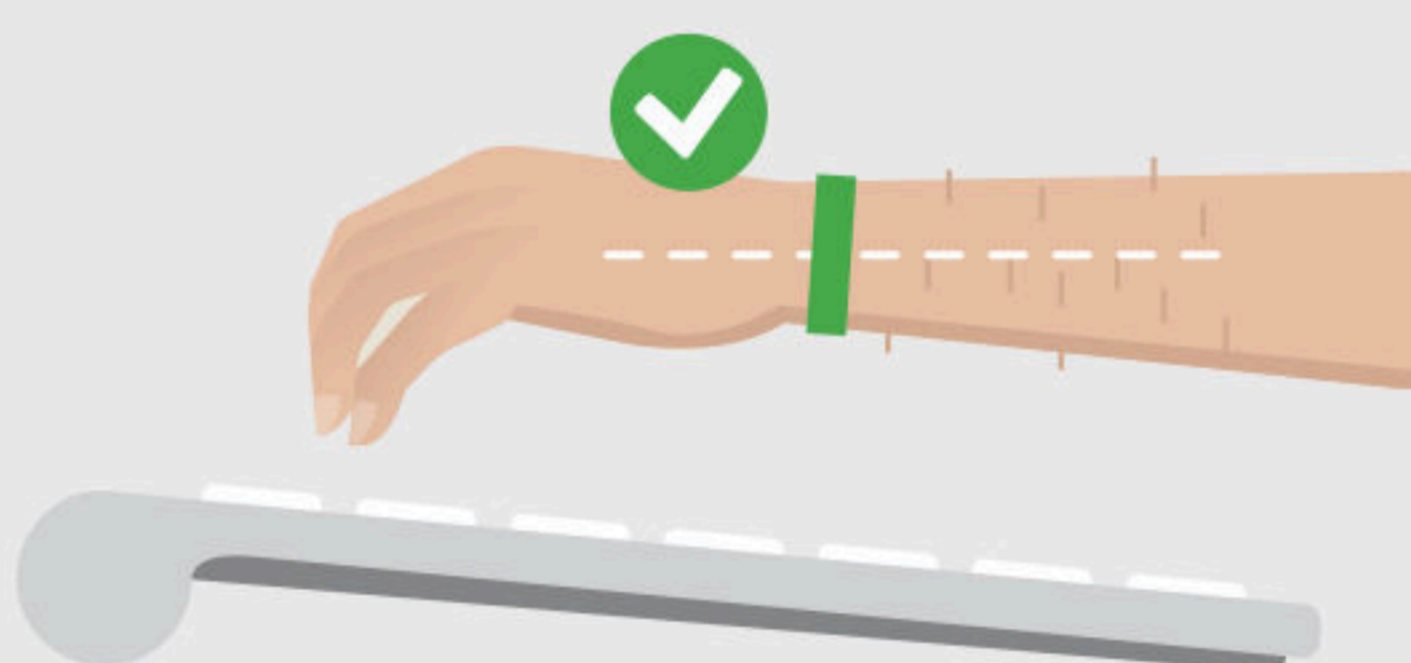
Forget bad habits

This can be tough, especially if you've been using the two-finger typing method since you first came in contact with a computer or if you're a gamer who uses only your left hand for clicking the WASD keys. However, if you want to type quickly and accurately, you'll need to drop those habits and start with a clean slate.



Position your hands

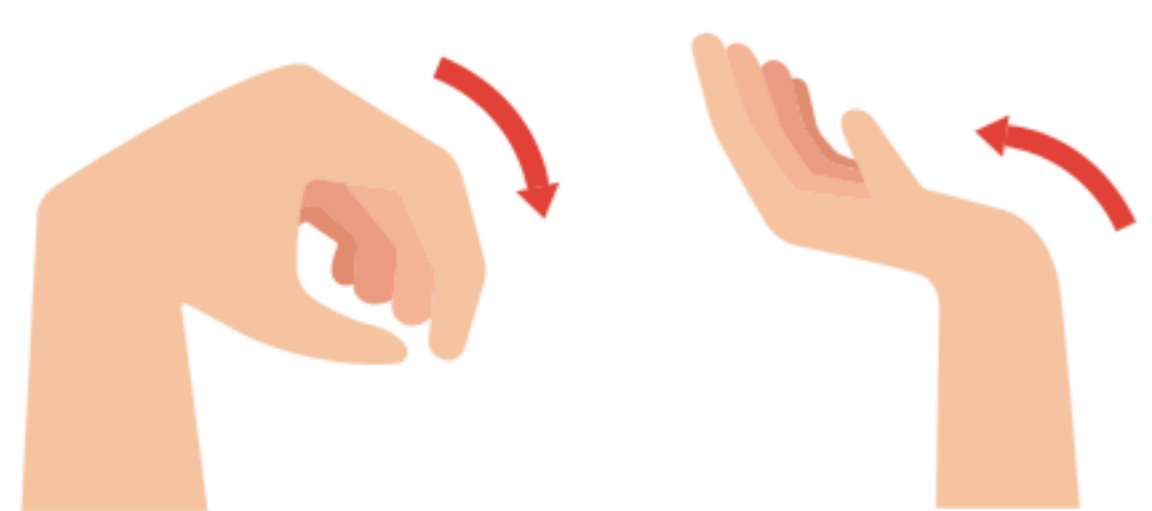
Keep your wrists elevated. A wrist support can help if you can't remember to do it self-supported. There is an array of supports available, such as cushions or foam bars, or you can improvise by placing a book so that it raises your wrist to a height almost level with the keyboard. You'll move faster and have fewer errors.



Prevention exercises

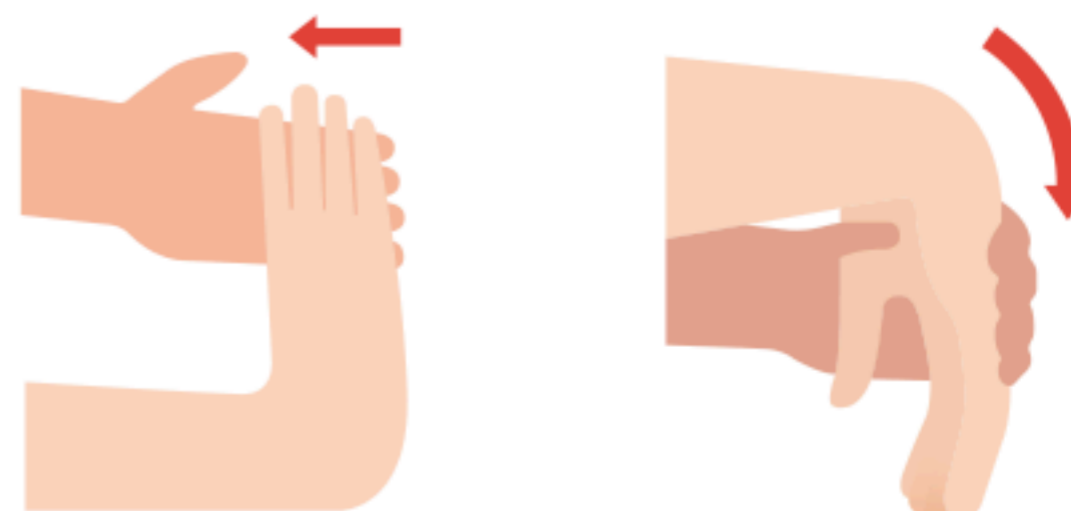
Wrist active range of motion

Gently blend your each hand upwards and down from the wrist, holding the stretch for a few minutes in each direction. Then bend and flex your fingers, too.



Wrist stretches

Isometric and stretching exercises can strengthen the muscles in the wrists and hands, as well as the neck and shoulders, improving blood flow to these areas. Performing the simple exercises described below for 4 - 5 minutes every hour may be helpful.



Final tips

- ▶ Use tools that are the proper size for your hands.
- ▶ Reduce the strain and relax your grip in your hands.
- ▶ Keep your hands warm. Prevention exercises will help.
- ▶ Arrange your workspace using ergonomic guidelines.
- ▶ Keep wrists at a relaxed position so they are not bent either up or down.

