

WHAT TO EXPECT AFTER CARPAL TUNNEL SURGERY

- You will be able to move your fingers immediately following surgery and are encouraged to do so to prevent stiffness.
- Patients can go home after surgery the same day.
- The dressing can be removed 48 hours after surgery.
- Please do not apply any creams or ointments (including Neosporin) to the fresh wound after surgery.
- The surgery typically only takes 5-10 minutes, but you will be at the surgery center for a few hours.
- You can expect some soreness in your palm for a few days and some bruising. Ibuprofen and Tylenol are best for treating this soreness.
- It is common to have soreness in the palm for up to 6 weeks.
- Grip strength returns to what it was before surgery usually in 4-6 weeks.
- You can start driving again as soon as you feel it's safe for you to drive, which is usually the day following surgery. You may be able to write and use a computer within a day or two as well.
- Most patients feel much better within the first few 5-7 days, but it can take up to six months for all swelling, numbness and stiffness to resolve. In severe cases, the nerve may not recover.
- It is common for the edge of surgical wound to peel a bit like a sunburn. This gets better after a few weeks.
- A small percentage (<10%) of patients find it helpful to have a visit or two with a hand therapy help with the motion and stiffness, especially in severe cases. Let us know if your recovery is moving slowly and you would like some additional help.

Additional online resources

ASSH.org

Arthritis.org

Orthoinfo.org