



*WORK COMP*

# CARPAL TUNNEL SYNDROME

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# WHAT IS CARPAL TUNNEL SYNDROME, AND IS IT COVERED UNDER WORKERS' COMP?

Carpal tunnel syndrome, a type of repetitive motion injury, can have a significant impact on your ability to work and on your daily life requiring use of anti-inflammatory medications, wrist splints, or corticosteroid injections. Often, if the symptoms progress, it requires surgery.

Also, repetitive motion injuries can develop slowly and may not show up on the first set of diagnostic studies, such as an EMG or Nerve Conduction Study. However, some doctors don't believe carpal tunnel syndrome is caused by repetitive work, and there are other risk factors that can contribute to it. An experienced workers' compensation attorney will be able determine how to best pursue your carpal tunnel claim.

## WHAT IS CARPAL TUNNEL?

The carpal tunnel is a narrow passageway in the wrist, about an inch wide. The floor and sides of the tunnel are formed by small wrist bones called carpal bones. The passageway houses nerves that connect directly to the hand. The main nerve is the median nerve. It originates as a group of nerve roots in the neck. The nerve provides feeling in the thumb and index, middle, and ring fingers. The nerve also controls the muscles around the base of the thumb. The nine tendons that bend the fingers and thumb also travel through the carpal tunnel.

Carpal tunnel syndrome occurs when the tunnel becomes narrowed or when tissues surrounding the tendons swell, putting pressure on the median nerve. This abnormal pressure on the nerve can result in pain, numbness, tingling, and weakness in the hand. The symptoms may occur at work, but can also wake you up in the middle of the night.



## CARPAL TUNNEL SYNDROME CAN DEVELOP WHEN WORKERS:

- Perform the same movements repeatedly
- Are exposed to vibration in their hands
- Work in awkward or fixed postures
- Sustain a trauma to the hand or wrist



## THE SYMPTOMS OF CARPAL TUNNEL INJURIES INCLUDE:

- Tingling or “pins and needles” in the hands and fingers
- Numbness or burning in the hands, or even forearms or elbows
- Difficulty in grasping objects
- Loss of feeling, which could be permanent



## COMMON JOBS THAT HAVE BEEN ATTRIBUTED TO CARPAL TUNNEL SYNDROME:

- Assembly line worker
- Office jobs with keyboarding
- Construction workers
- Lawn mowers and landscapers
- Cashiers
- Hair stylist and dog groomers
- Sewer or knitter
- Bakers and butchers
- Musicians
- Any job with vibrating tools or hand tools



## WHEN TO CONTACT AN ATTORNEY:

Like other work-related injuries, carpal tunnel can be a financial burden; the medical costs and loss of wages can add up quickly. If any of the following happens, it's time to get an attorney.

- Your employer or their work comp insurer denies that it's from your job
- You have been refused medical treatment or nerve tests
- The doctor chosen by the employer or insurance company says that he/she doesn't think carpal tunnel is caused by repetitive work
- An employer or insurance company has requested a recorded statement
- Your employer has had someone videotape your job duties or perform an ergonomic assessment of your work station after you reported your symptoms

The law says you cannot be fired for filing a carpal tunnel claim, but it's common for workers to be afraid to file a worker's compensation claim because of the fear of being fired. However, if you wait too long to talk to an attorney about your rights, it can will impact your claim.

Since Carpal Tunnel Syndrome usually does not occur as the result of a single obvious accident or injury, it can be difficult to prove. An experienced workers' compensation attorney is usually required to show the syndrome is work-related, to get the appropriate medical treatment, and to obtain the proper compensation from the work comp insurance company.

*The Hines & Wilson Law Firm has more than 50 years of experience with workers' compensation claims. We will use our experience and knowledge to get you the compensation you deserve. If you've been injured at work or think you have carpal tunnel syndrome, call us at (573) 443-4500, our toll-free number (877) 473-4500, or email [info@hineswilsonlaw.com](mailto:info@hineswilsonlaw.com) for a free and confidential consultation about your claim. If you wait too long, you may lose your right to compensation.*

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