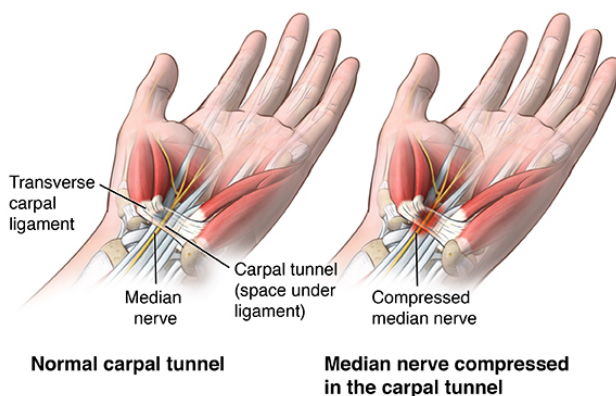


### What is Carpal Tunnel Release?

A carpal tunnel release is an operation to free the median nerve which runs through the carpal tunnel in the wrist.

It involves making a small cut down the front of the wrist and palm of the hand. A band of tissue which is pressing on the median nerve is identified and divided to release the pressure on the nerve. Once the nerve is completely free, the skin is closed with stitches.



[www.hopkinsmedicine.org](http://www.hopkinsmedicine.org)

- Numbness and tingling in the fingers and thumb may persist.
- The operation occasionally does not work and needs to be done again.
- Damage to the tendons, which may require surgical repair of the tendons.
- Damage to the median nerve, requiring re-operation and nerve repair.
- Wrist pain when making a fist or leaning on the wrist, which is temporary.
- The surgical cut may cause changes to the sensation and colour of the hand.
- In some people, healing of the wound can become thickened and red and the scar may be painful. This may be permanent.

### Rare risks and complications (less than 1%)

- Increased risk in obese people of wound infection, chest infection, heart and lung complications and thrombosis.
- Severe burning pain, unresponsive to treatment.
- Death as a result of this procedure is very rare.

### Anaesthetic

This operation can be performed under local anaesthetic with some sedation. However in certain patients a general anaesthetic may be used.

### What are the risks of this specific procedure?

There are risks and complications with this procedure. They include but are not limited to the following.

### Common risks and complications (more than 5%)

- Infection, requiring antibiotics and further treatment.
- Minor pain, bruising and/or infection from IV cannula site. This may require treatment with antibiotics.
- Redness and peeling of the palm. This usually improves within 4 weeks.

### Uncommon risks and complications (1-5%) include:

- Bleeding can occur and may require a return to the operating room. Bleeding is more common if you have been taking blood thinning drugs.