

FACTS AT A GLANCE

- Carpal Tunnel Syndrome (CTS) affects over 3 million people in the US every year.
- Causes numbness, tingling, pain and weakness in the hand, wrist and forearm.
- Confirmation of CTS requires a medical diagnosis.
- Once diagnosed, medical professionals can effectively treat CTS.
- Many routine tasks that workers perform can contribute to the development of CTS.
- Women are more likely than men to develop CTS.
- The best outcomes can be achieved through early diagnosis and treatment.
- Take steps to avoid or reduce activities that put you at risk.

TIPS FOR PREVENTION

- Perform stretching exercises.
- Take frequent rest breaks. Vary job tasks.
- Use correct posture and wrist position.
- Use a keyboard tray and wrist rest.
- Keep hands and wrists warm.

DC 37 SAFETY AND HEALTH FACTSHEET

CARPAL TUNNEL SYNDROME (CTS)

Carpal Tunnel Syndrome (CTS) is a very common injury. There are over 3 million cases per year in the United States. Many DC 37 members work in jobs that put them at risk of developing a carpal tunnel injury.

- CTS is a condition that causes numbness, tingling, and pain in the hand and forearm. The condition occurs when one of the major nerves that supply the hand — the median nerve — is squeezed or compressed as it travels through the wrist.
- If left untreated, CTS can lead to permanent dysfunction of the hand, including loss of sensation in the fingers and weakness. It is important to diagnose and treat carpal tunnel syndrome promptly.
- Early symptoms can often be relieved with simple measures like:
 - Wearing a wrist splint while sleeping
 - Exercises to keep the nerve mobile
 - Avoiding certain activities that aggravate your symptoms
 - A steroid injection into the carpal tunnel
 - But as the condition worsens, surgery to take pressure off the median nerve may be needed to prevent permanent damage.
- Common activities that can lead to CTS include:

REPETITION+AWKWARD POSTURE+ NO REST + FORCE

- High-force (e.g., hammering)
- Repetitive motions
- Long-term use
- Extreme wrist motions or positions
- Vibration

For more information, visit the following websites:

<https://orthoinfo.aaos.org/en/diseases--conditions/carpal-tunnel-syndrome/> ;

<https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/carpal-tunnel-syndrome/symptoms-causes/syc-20355603>

Sources: American Academy of Orthopedic Surgeons;
National Institutes of Health; Mayo Clinic

Video Display Terminal (VDT) and Mayoral Agencies

- If you work on a Video Display Terminal (VDT), essentially use a computer and keyboard for 20 continuous hours or more learn about your contractual rights to alternative work breaks and make sure that any new equipment purchased complies with Mayoral Directive #1-91.
- You can request a VDT ergonomic assessment of your workstation
- Required equipment and ancillary equipment:
Adjustable keyboard tray (height and tilt) with mousepad
 - Negative tilt
 - Neutral. (Best position). This is the position when your hand is in line with your wrist
 - Positive tilt
- Keyboard Quick Tips:
 - Position the keyboard directly in front of you.
 - Your shoulders should be relaxed and your elbows close to your body.
 - Your wrists should be straight and in-line with your forearms
- Wrist rest shall be provided upon request by employee
- Reasonable Accommodation. You can request a wrist brace by making a reasonable accommodation request

For more information consult:
Mayoral Directive No. 1-91
Citywide Contract Article XVIII