Wrist Splint

A wrist splint is a brace that holds your wrist in a nearly straight but sometimes slightly bent-back position. A wrist splint decreases pressure on the median nerve. The median nerve is the nerve involved in the carpal tunnel syndrome. The splint allows for resting the structures in the wrist. It provides a period of rest from the movements that worsen carpal tunnel syndrome.

Splints are available in drugstores without a prescription. They are also available by prescription from orthopedic and medical supply houses. Custom made splints from lightweight materials may be more comfortable and better fitting. These can be made by a physical or occupational therapist.

Use the following guidelines when using a wrist splint:

- Wear the splint as directed. It may be worn during sleep to reduce pain and pressure on the median nerve.
- Wearing a wrist splint at work can strain the hand's tendons. Use during work only if instructed to do so by your caregiver or therapist.
- A wrist splint is a helpful short-term treatment. Long term use can weaken your muscles.
- Following splint use, slowly exercise your hand and wrist movements. This helps maintain muscle strength.

HOME CARE INSTRUCTIONS

- When not working, use ice on your wrist for 20 minutes every couple hours while awake. Put the ice in a plastic bag and place a towel between the bag of ice and your skin.
- Keep your arm raised above the level of your heart whenever possible to reduce swelling and pain.
- Only take over-the-counter or prescription medicines for pain, discomfort, or fever as directed by your caregiver.

SEEK MEDICAL CARE IF:

- You have increased pain or swelling in your wrist not relieved with medications.
- You feel as though you are losing more feeling in your hand.
- You have increasing pain or difficulty moving your fingers.

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