

## ABOUT YOUR CONDITION

sample Patient 09/29/2022

### WHAT'S WRONG?



#### Radial Tunnel Syndrome

Your radial nerve begins in your neck and travels past your elbow en route to its final destination in your hand. Just beyond your elbow, this nerve passes through a 2-inch area on the back of your forearm called the "Radial tunnel". "Radial tunnel syndrome" means that your radial nerve has been compressed or irritated within this space-leading to forearm pain or hand weakness.

Radial tunnel syndrome is thought to result from muscular overuse, especially prolonged or excessive wrist extension or rotation. The most common cause of compression comes from excessive tightness in a muscle called the "Supinator". Workers whose jobs require heavy or repetitive wrist movements are at an increased risk for this disorder. Occasionally, the radial nerve can become irritated from direct compression by a tight band or brace. The condition may be more common in those who have diabetes or thyroid problems.

Symptoms from irritation of the radial nerve depend upon which specific nerve fibers are irritated. The most common symptoms include pain, numbness, tingling, or decreased sensitivity along the top of your forearm radiating toward your hand and thumb. The symptoms often mimic those of "tennis elbow." When the nerve fibers that control muscle function become compressed, you may experience weakness when trying to extend your fingers, hand, or wrist. Seventy percent of radial tunnel patients also have problems in their neck or upper back.

Conservative treatment of radial tunnel syndrome is generally successful. Fixing the problem means limiting excessive or repetitive wrist movements, especially extension and rotation. In severe cases, a splint may be necessary to limit your motion. Try to avoid compression of your forearm, particularly from tight bands or braces. Try not to sleep with your affected arm tucked under your pillow. Instead, sleep with your arms at your sides to avoid sustained compression. Use of a tennis elbow brace will likely aggravate your symptoms. You may find relief by applying ice or ice massage to the area for 10-15 minutes at a time.

---

## THINGS WE CAN DO TO HELP YOU

---



### Joint Manipulation

Your provider has found joints in your body that are not moving freely. This can cause tightness and discomfort and can accelerate unwanted degeneration i.e. arthritis. Your provider will apply a gentle force with their hands, or with handheld instruments, in order to restore motion to any "restricted" joints. Sometimes a specialized table will be used to assist with these safe and effective "adjustments". Joint manipulation improves flexibility, relieves pain, and helps maintain healthy joints.



### Therapy Modalities

We may apply electrotherapy modalities that produce light electrical pulses transmitted through electrodes placed over your specific sites of concern. These comfortable modalities work to decrease your pain, limit inflammation and ease muscle spasms. Hot or cold packs are often used in conjunction, to enhance the effect of these modalities.

Another available option is therapeutic ultrasound. Ultrasound pushes sound vibrations into tissues. When these vibrations reach your deep tissues, heat develops, and unwanted waste products are dispersed.



### Myofascial Release

Overworked muscles often become tight and develop knots or "trigger points". Chronic tightness produces inflammation and swelling that ultimately leads to the formation of "adhesions" between tissues. Your provider will apply pressure with their hands, or with specialized tools, in order to release muscle tightness and soft-tissue adhesions. This will help to improve your circulation, relieve pain and restore flexibility.



### Therapeutic Exercise

Muscle tightness or weakness causes discomfort and alters normal joint function, leading to additional problems. Your chiropractor will target tight or weak muscles with specific therapeutic stretching and strengthening to help increase tissue flexibility, build strength, and ease the pain. Healthy, strong, and flexible muscles may help prevent re-injury.

---

## THINGS YOU CAN DO TO HELP YOURSELF

---



### Workstation Ergonomics

Ergonomics is the science of adjusting your workstation to minimize strain in the following ways:

- Monitors should be visible without leaning or straining and the top line of type should be 15 degrees below eye level.
- Use audio equipment that keeps you from bending your neck (i.e., Bluetooth, speakerphones, headsets).
- Keep your shoulders relaxed and elbows bent to 90 degrees.
- Wrists should not be bent while at the keyboard. Forearms and wrists should not be leaning on a hard edge.
- Keep frequently used objects, like your telephone, close to your body to prevent excessive reaching.
- Take a 10-second break every 20 minutes: Micro activities include: walking, stretching, or moving your head in a "plus sign" fashion.
- Periodically, perform the "Brugger relief position" - Position your body at a chair's edge, feet pointed outward. Weight should be on your legs and your abdomen should be relaxed. Tilt your pelvis forward, lift your sternum, arch your back, drop your arms, and roll out your palms while squeezing your shoulders together. Take a few deep cleansing breaths.

### Sitting Workstations

- Hips and knees bent 90 degrees, feet flat on floor or footrest.
- Use a lumbar roll for lower back support.
- Avoid sitting on anything that would create an imbalance or uneven pressure (like your wallet).

### Standing Workstations

- Keep your head, neck, torso, and legs vertically aligned.
- Wear shoes that provide proper arch support.
- Use a footrest to shift your weight from foot to foot.
- Adjust the footrest to approximately 10% of your total body height.

---

## EXERCISES AT HOME

---

The following exercises have been specifically selected to assist with your recovery and help minimize future problems. Exercises should be performed slowly and within a relatively comfortable range. Maintain good posture and breathe naturally. Do not hold your breath. Unless otherwise instructed, stop any exercises that cause pain, or radiating symptoms.

### Access your exercise videos

Scan me

OR



Visit HealthCom.io



Username: **spatient32** | Password: **Current Password**

---

## CURRENT EXERCISES

---



### Radial Nerve Floss

**Perform 3 sets of 10 reps, 2 times per day**

Begin in a standing position with your head straight and your affected hand on your chest. Simultaneously tip your head toward the opposite side while straightening your affected elbow and rotating your hand/wrist into a "Butler tip" position. You may increase this floss by "dropping" your affected shoulder at the start of each repetition. Perform three sets of 10 repetitions twice per day or as directed.



### Clasp Stretch

**Perform 1 set of 3 reps, 2 times per day**

Place your hands palm to palm and interlock your fingers. Straighten your arms in front as far as possible. Flex your wrists from side to side to increase the stretch. Hold for 10 seconds. Perform as directed.



### Wrist Extensor Stretch- Table

**Perform 1 set of 3 contract/relax cycles, 2 times per day**

Begin standing near a table with your arm dropped and elbow straight. Flex your wrist so that your fingers are pointing away from your thigh with your palm upward. (Butler's tip position) Place your hand and wrist flat on the table and gently lean your shoulder over the top of your hand until you feel a stretch. Against the resistance of the table, attempt to extend your wrist straight for seven seconds. Relax and lean further over the top of your hand to increase the stretch. "Lock in" to this new position and repeat three contract/relax cycles twice per day or as directed. To increase the stretch, make a fist.



### Brachioradialis Stretch

**Perform 1 set of 30 seconds, 2 times per day**

Stand with your back facing a table or desk. Touch your thumb and index finger tips together. Place this "circle" thumb down on the desk behind you. Straighten your arm and lean back over the top of your arm until you feel a stretch. Hold this position for 30 seconds. If directed, you may perform this as a contract/relax stretch by gently pushing your hand against the desk for seven seconds, then relax, and lean to increase the stretch. Perform this stretch for 30 seconds twice per day or as directed.



### Supinator Stretch

**Perform 1 set of 3 contract/relax cycles, 2 times per day**

Begin with your affected arm straightened in front of you, palm down. Stack your other hand, palm down, on the back of your affected hand. Clasp the fingers and thumb of your upper hand around your lower hand and twist your lower hand so that your lower thumb is pointing downward. Against the resistance of your top hand, attempt to rotate your affected palm back upward for 7 seconds. Relax and use your unaffected hand to increase the stretch. "Lock in" to this new position and repeat 3 contract relax cycles, twice per day or as directed.