

FULL CIRCLE HAND THERAPY

YOU'RE IN GOOD HANDS



CUBITAL TUNNEL SYNDROME

The ulnar nerve is one of the primary nerves in the arm that travels from the neck, along the arm, through the elbow to the fingers. When this nerve is irritated or stretched at the elbow level, a condition called cubital tunnel syndrome can develop. Cubital tunnel syndrome gets its name from the tunnel in which the nerve travels. When people say they hit their "funny bone," it is actually the ulnar nerve.

CAUSES

Cubital tunnel syndrome has several possible causes. The nerve can stretch when the elbow is bent for long periods of time with activities such as sleeping or holding a phone to the ear. The anatomy can be another cause, as the nerve can shift over the bony part of the inside of the elbow during motion. Direct pressure on the elbow, frequent bending or intense physical activity of the elbow can also irritate the nerve.

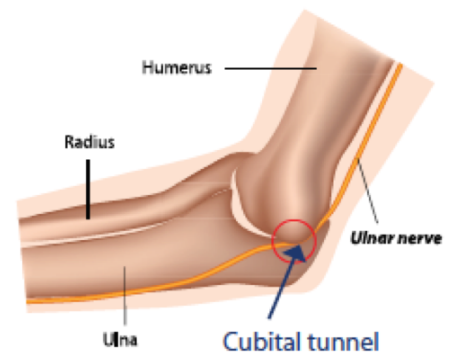
SYMPTOMS

Pain, numbness, tingling and weakness in the hand are all symptoms of cubital tunnel syndrome. Numbness, or loss of sensation, is usually felt in the small and ring fingers. This numbness may gradually turn into pain. Putting pressure on the elbow or bumping it can cause an "electric shock" sensation to the fingers. Other symptoms can include "clumsiness" in the hand, or a claw-like deformity of the ring and small fingers.

TREATMENT

For nonsurgical treatment, your health care professional will usually recommend you see a hand therapist for education and intervention to help relieve the symptoms. Often this will involve some splint, positioning and exercises. If the symptoms do not improve, we will liaise with your team to determine the best path of treatment which may involve a surgical release of the nerve, and your hand therapist will guide you through the recovery process.

Ulnar Nerve Impingement



HOW CAN WE HELP?

We will help determine which activities aggravate the symptoms, and assist you in modifying these activities. Treatment may include exercises for the arm and hand, taping, fitting for a padded elbow sleeve, as well as a custom made orthosis for night use. If surgery is performed, therapy will assist in restoring normal range of motion and function of the arm and hand.