

Management of Carpal Tunnel Syndrome

Funding will be considered where the patient meets the following criteria.

Where the diagnosis is unclear the MSK service will liaise with providers to develop a management plan.

Clinicians need to ensure that the patients fulfil all criteria before they are referred for consideration of surgical intervention.

Where patients do not fulfil the criteria an IFR will need to be completed. This can be found on the CCG's website.

<https://www.greaterhuddersfieldccg.nhs.uk/key-publications/individual-funding-requests-ifr/>

<https://www.calderdaleccg.nhs.uk/key-documents/>

Nerve conduction studies are NOT generally needed to confirm the diagnosis. In elderly patients the condition may develop insidiously and nerve conduction studies *may* be useful to assess severity.

The CTS questionnaire can be used to support diagnosis.

CTS score >5 strongly suggestive of carpal tunnel syndrome (but not the severity)

CTS score of 3-4 carpal tunnel syndrome is a possible cause of symptoms

CTS score of 0-2 is unlikely to be indicative of carpal tunnel syndrome (NCS not indicated)

Mild symptoms

Treatment for mild symptoms is not normally funded. In all cases where symptoms are mild an IFR needs to be made.

Moderate symptoms

- A diagnosis of CTS is certain (where there is diagnostic uncertainty a specialist opinion is required)
- The patient has not responded to a minimum of 6 months of conservative management, including:
 - >8 weeks of night-time use of wrist splints
 - Appropriate analgesia
 - Corticosteroid injections (given at least twice prior to referral) in appropriate patients
 - Appropriate use of resting splints
- The symptoms are interfering with activities of daily living

Severe advanced

- Advanced or severe neurological symptoms of CTS such as constant pins and needles, numbness, muscle wasting and prominent pain

References

1. NICE CKS Carpal tunnel syndrome. <https://cks.nice.org.uk/carpal-tunnel-syndrome>
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3. Bland JDP. Carpal tunnel syndrome. Curr Opin Neurol 2005;18:581-5. [PubMed]
4. Bland J (2007) Clinical Review: Carpal tunnel syndrome. BMJ 2007;335;p343-346 <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC1949464/>
5. BSSH: Carpal Tunnel Syndrome. http://www.bssh.ac.uk/patients/conditions/21/carpal_tunnel_syndrome
6. Royal College of Surgeons Commissioning Guide: Treatment of painful tingling fingers (November 2013) - currently under review
7. <https://southwest.devonformularyguidance.nhs.uk/referral-guidance/western-locality/musculoskeletal/carpal-tunnel>
8. British Orthopedic Association - Commissioning guide: Treatment of painful tingling fingers https://www.boa.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/2014/06/Treatment-of-painful-tingling-fingers_FINAL2.pdf
9. Patient Info - Carpal Tunnel Syndrome. <https://patient.info/health/carpal-tunnel-syndrome-leaflet>