

Open Carpal Tunnel Release

Understanding Your Risks

This document outlines the potential complications associated with **open carpal tunnel release**. This is a surgical procedure performed through a small incision in the palm/wrist to divide the transverse carpal ligament, thereby relieving pressure on the median nerve.

The usual purpose of surgery is to **relieve symptoms of carpal tunnel syndrome**, including numbness, tingling, pain, and weakness in the hand, and to prevent further nerve damage in patients who have persistent or progressive symptoms despite nonoperative treatment.

Risks:

- **Persistent or recurrent numbness, tingling, or pain**
- **Incomplete relief of symptoms or delayed improvement**
- **Pillar pain** (pain at the base of the palm)
- **Scar tenderness or sensitivity**
- **Stiffness or reduced grip or pinch strength**
- **Nerve injury** (including median nerve or palmar cutaneous branch injury)
- **Blood vessel injury**
- **Infection** (superficial or deep)
- **Bleeding or hematoma formation**
- **Wound healing problems**
- **Complex regional pain syndrome (CRPS)**
- **Need for revision surgery**

- **Medical complications** (deep vein thrombosis, pulmonary embolism, cardiac or **pulmonary events** (rare))
- **Death** (extremely rare)

Risk Factors for Increased Complications:

- **Diabetes, Smoking or tobacco use, Obesity, Advanced age**
- **Revision surgery**

Patient Acknowledgment:

By signing below, the patient acknowledges understanding of the above risks associated with open carpal tunnel release and all questions have been answered to the patient's satisfaction.

Patient Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

Patient Name: _____ **DOB:** _____

