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# How Do I Know If I Have Carpal Tunnel Syndrome?



Your doctor may use a handful of tests to diagnose [carpal tunnel syndrome](#) and rule out other causes of [hand and wrist pain](#).

He'll probably start with questions about your medical history. Then he'll do a [physical exam](#) of your hands, arms, shoulders, and neck. He'll try to figure out if your pain is due to another condition, like an injury or [arthritis](#). He'll also make sure your daily activities aren't to blame.

The doctor may focus on your wrist to see if the area is tender, swollen, warm, or discolored. He'll probably test each finger to see if you've lost any feeling. And he'll

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Learn common causes of arm pain.



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How to protect your hands and wrists.



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Visual Guide to Carpal Tunnel Syndrome



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Video on How to Ease Carpal Tunnel Pain



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check the strength of the muscles in your hand.

After that, he may do or order any of the following tests. They'll focus on the median nerve, which runs through your forearm into your hand. When that nerve gets pressed or squeezed through the [carpal tunnel](#), it causes carpal tunnel syndrome.

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### YOU MIGHT LIKE

#### Tinel's Sign

The doctor will tap or press on the median nerve in your wrist with a reflex hammer. If your fingers tingle or if you feel an electric-shock-like sensation, the test is positive. You may have carpal tunnel syndrome.

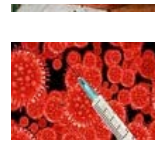
#### Phalen's Maneuver

This is also known as the wrist-flexion test. The doctor will tell you to press the backs of your hands and fingers together with your wrists flexed and your fingers pointed down. You'll stay that way for 1-2 minutes. If your fingers tingle or get numb, you have carpal tunnel syndrome.

#### Two-Point Discrimination Test

This means you can tell if two objects touching your [skin](#) are two distinct points instead of just one. Your doctor may use a gadget called a 2-point disk-criminator, a small, flat, eight-sided tool with needle-like prongs sticking out from all sides.

He might do the test several times on each finger. He'll start with two points touching your skin a few centimeters apart and move them closer together until you feel just one point of pressure.



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The distance at which you can feel only one point will help him figure out nerve function and compression -- two important components of carpal tunnel syndrome.

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