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Department of Women's Health Physiotherapy

## Carpal Tunnel Syndrome

### Patient Information Sheet



### What is Carpal Tunnel Syndrome?

Carpal Tunnel Syndrome (CTS) is a fairly common complaint associated with pregnancy. It is thought to be caused by a general increase in oedema (fluid) causing compression of the median nerve at the wrist. This compression can result in altered sensation, pain and/or weakness in the muscles of the hand.

### Common Symptoms:

- Burning / Tingling sensations in the hand especially at night
- Difficulty performing simple tasks (eg. Doing up buttons on a shirt)

### Symptom Management:

- Elevate the hands as often as possible with pillows when resting
- Wear night splints to keep the wrist in neutral
- After a period of rest (15 minutes) perform simple hand exercises to increase circulation and reduce pain as comfort allows
- Trial pressure gloves – only to be used if hands are swollen
- Avoid sustained positions when using i-pads / tablets
- Adopt a good upright posture (especially post-natally when feeding)
- Change hand position when pushing buggy – less gripping, keep wrist in neutral