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| Intervention   | **025. Carpal Tunnel Syndrome Release**  |
| For the treatment of   | Median nerve compression in the carpal tunnel  |
| Commissioning Position   | This intervention is only commissioned if the following criteria have been met:    * there are symptoms which significantly interfere with daily activities and sleep symptoms AND
* Symptoms have not settled to a manageable level with either one local corticosteroid injection and/or nocturnal splinting for a minimum of 8 weeks

OR  * ever-present reduction in sensation in the median nerve distribution OR
* muscle wasting or weakness of thenar abduction.

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| Summary of Rationale   | Carpal tunnel syndrome is very common, and mild cases may never require any treatment. Cases which interfere with activities or sleep may resolve or settle to a manageable level with non-operative treatments such as a steroid injection (good evidence of short-term benefit (8-12 weeks) but many progress to surgery within 1 year). Wrist splints worn at night (weak evidence of benefit) may also be used but are less effective than steroid injections and reported as less cost-effective than surgery.  In refractory (keeps coming back) or severe cases, surgery (good evidence of excellent clinical effectiveness and long term benefit) should be considered. The surgery has a high success rate (75 to 90%) in patients with intermittent symptoms who have had a good short-term benefit from a previous steroid injection. Surgery will also prevent patients with constant wooliness of their fingers from becoming worse and can restore normal sensation to patients with total loss of sensation over a period of months.   |
| References   | [EBI Carpal Tunnel Syndrome Release](https://ebi.aomrc.org.uk/interventions/carpal-tunnel-syndrome-release/) <https://cks.nice.org.uk/topics/carpal-tunnel-syndrome/> [girft-carpal\_tunnel.pdf (bssh.ac.uk)](https://www.bssh.ac.uk/_userfiles/pages/files/professionals/girft/girft-carpal_tunnel.pdf) [Treatment of Painful Tingling Fingers - Commissioning Guide — Royal College of Surgeons (rcseng.ac.uk)](https://www.rcseng.ac.uk/library-and-publications/rcs-publications/docs/treatment-painful-fingers/)  |
| Effective from  | October 2024  |
| Policy Review Date   | October 2027  |