|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 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. |
| 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 |