

## *H16 Treating Carpal Tunnel Syndrome*

April 2007

Intro: Pain, numbness and weakness in your hands. All symptoms of carpal tunnel syndrome. Research at Mayo Clinic suggests there are many causes of carpal tunnel syndrome, and thankfully there are treatments that can help. How do you know which treatment is right for you? Let's go to Mayo Clinic to learn about some options.

### **Video**

**Total running time 1:35**

**Christian Mendez  
Has Carpal Tunnel Syndrome**

**Peter Murray, M.D.  
Mayo Clinic Surgeon**

### **Audio**

“SCREWDRIVERS. CONSTANTLY RATCHETING THINGS.”

CHRISTIAN MENDEZ [MEN'-DEZ] DEPENDS ON HIS HANDS TO MAKE A LIVING.

“EVERYTHING I DO I DO WITH MY HANDS. WITHOUT MY HANDS I COULDN'T DO MY JOB...PERIOD.”

SO WHEN CHRISTIAN DEVELOPED SYMPTOMS OF CARPAL TUNNEL SYNDROME, HE GOT WORRIED.

“IT CAUSES SENSORY CONDUCTION CHANGES IN THE NERVES SO PEOPLE PERCEIVE THAT THEIR HAND IS NUMB. SOMETIMES THEY PERCEIVE IT AS PAIN.”

**Christian Mendez**  
**Has Carpal Tunnel Syndrome**

**Standup**  
**Vivien Williams**  
**Reporting**

**graphics:**  
**Carpal Tunnel Syndrome**

- **Splinting**
- **Injections**
- **Time**

**animation**

DR. PETER MURRAY SAYS IT MAY ALSO CAUSE WEAKNESS.

“IF I WAS USING A WRENCH OR SOMETHING. IT WOULD JUST SLIP OUT OF MY HANDS.”

CARPAL TUNNEL SYNDROME HAPPENS WHEN THE MAIN NERVE THAT GOES TO THE HAND GETS IRRITATED BY A TIGHT BAND OF TISSUE CALLED THE TRANSVERSE CARPAL LIGAMENT.

THE TREATMENT YOU CHOOSE WILL LIKELY DEPEND ON HOW SEVERE YOUR SYMPTOMS ARE. IF YOU’VE HAD THE CONDITION FOR LESS THAN 12 MONTHS, SPLINTING, INJECTIONS AND TIME MAY HELP RESOLVE THE PROBLEM. IF SYMPTOMS HAVE LASTED LONGER THAN 12 MONTHS SURGERY MAY BE NECESSARY. DURING CARPAL TUNNEL RELEASE SURGERY DOCTORS MAKE A

SMALL INCISION THROUGH WHICH  
THEY CUT THE TIGHT CARPAL  
LIGAMENT. THIS RELEASES  
PRESSURE OFF THE NERVE.  
SOME STUDIES SHOW UP TO 99-  
PERCENT OF PEOPLE WHO HAVE  
CARPAL TUNNEL SURGERY GAIN  
RELIEF FROM SYMPTOMS. BUT DR.  
MURRAY HAS SHOWN IN A RECENT  
STUDY THAT RESULTS OF  
SURGERY MAY NOT BE AS GOOD IF  
YOU'RE OVER 75 OR HAVE HAD  
CARPAL TUNNEL FOR A LONG  
TIME. OLDER PEOPLE MAY ALSO  
HAVE OTHER CONDITIONS SUCH  
AS DIABETES OR ARTHRITIS THAT  
CAUSE OVERLAPPING SYMPTOMS.  
BUT CHRISTIAN, WHO'S ONLY 58  
YEARS OLD, SAYS SURGERY HAS  
ALLOWED HIM TO RETURN TO  
WORK IN FULL FORCE.  
"I'M BACK IN ACTION NOW."  
FOR MEDICAL EDGE, I'M VIVIEN

**Christian Mendez**

## WILLIAMS

Anchor tag:

It took Christian about six weeks to recover form the operation. But he says it was worth it to be able to work pain free. For more information about the causes, symptoms and treatments of carpal tunnel syndrome, visit our Website at...**[STATIONS: Per the licensing agreement, please provide a link from your station's website to <http://www.mayoclinic.org> or voice tag "mayoclinic.org" for more information.]**