

PAIN & DISABILITYSM

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Pinched Nerve - GENERAL

Nerve Entrapment Disorders
Thoracic Outlet Syndrome
Electrodiagnostic Tests

Nerve Entrapment Disorders:

Carpal Tunnel Syndrome:

Repetitive work can cause pressure on the median nerve in locations other than the wrist and can also affect other nerves in the arm and hand.

Ulnar Tunnel Syndrome:

The ulnar nerve supplies sensation to the ring and little fingers. Like the median nerve, it too can become trapped as a result of repetitive stress, with subsequent loss of sensation in these fingers and the outer half of the palm. This condition, known as ulnar tunnel syndrome.

Thoracic Outlet Syndrome:

Pinched nerves in the neck may also cause weakness in the hands. A disorder known as thoracic outlet syndrome caused by compression of nerves and blood vessels running down the neck into the arm can cause symptoms very similar to CTS. The compression occurs at the first rib in the front of the shoulder.

Diagnosis:

- Electromyography
- Nerve conduction velocity studies
- Thermography

Electrodiagnostic Tests:

There are two common types of electrodiagnostic tests: nerve conduction studies and electromyographies. The tests analyze the electric waveforms of nerves and muscles to detect median nerve compression in the carpal tunnel. To perform nerve conduction studies, surface electrodes are first fastened to the hand and wrist. Small electric shocks are then applied to the nerves in the fingers, wrist, and forearm to measure the speed of conduction of sensory and motor nerve fibers. To perform electromyography, a fine sterile, wire electrode is inserted briefly into a muscle and the electrical activity is displayed on a viewing screen.