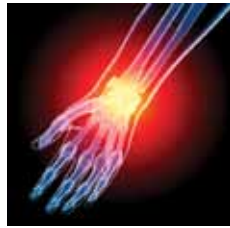




What is nerve entrapment?

By the Ability Rehab Staff

Have you ever experienced pain in your wrists during the night? Numbness and tingling in your fingers? Lack of coordination or decreased circulation in your extremities? You may be suffering from nerve entrapment syndrome.



Our nervous system is comprised of two main parts:

the central nervous system and the peripheral nervous system. The central nervous system is composed of the brain and spinal cord. The peripheral nervous system is composed of a series of nerves that course through our bodies carrying signals back and forth from the brain and spinal cord to our limbs.

Just like our musculoskeletal system, our nervous system is susceptible to stress, strain and compression, which can irritate the nerve. A history of trauma, swelling, cysts and bone spurs can predispose the nerve to irritation. Irritated nerves develop scarring and adhesions, which can result in the nerve being trapped at various regions along their path. This nerve entrapment frequently occurs at tunnels (i.e. carpal tunnel, thoracic outlet, tarsal tunnel) which are prone to compression and repetitive stress injuries.

Nerve entrapment can result in pain, numbness/tingling, and eventually lead to muscle weakness. Fortunately, physical therapy can be extremely effective in reducing the symptoms and preventing future occurrences of nerve entrapment.

Physical Therapy treatment for nerve entrapment can include:

- Splinting:** immobilization of certain joints reduces the strain and pressure on the nerves
- Postural re-education:** proper body mechanics and improved posture can reduce occurrence of nerve entrapment
- Neurodynamic exercises:** nerve gliding can be performed to reduce restrictions and increase the mobility of the nerve

