



# Surgical Innovation

## CARPAL TUNNEL RELEASE



Kayvon Izadi, M.D.

Imagine having surgery over your lunch hour and being able to return to work.

Patients of Kayvon Izadi, M.D., orthopedic hand and upper extremity surgeon at Methodist Physicians Clinic Orthopedics, have done just that after undergoing carpal tunnel release.

After administering a local anesthetic, making a 1- to 2-centimeter incision, then cutting the transverse carpal ligament — Dr. Izadi has his

patients on their way and no longer suffering from carpal tunnel symptoms. The entire visit takes about one hour. Dr. Izadi's patients enjoy the ease of the experience and the ability to return to work the same day.

"All carpal tunnel operations involve cutting the transverse carpal ligament to relieve pressure on the median nerve," Dr. Izadi said. "The incision size and use of local anesthetic are what's different. This procedure is minimally invasive and patients like the

convenience of a local anesthetic. For cosmetic purposes, many of them prefer the small incision."

Dr. Izadi learned the technique while completing his fellowship at the Indiana Hand Center in Indianapolis.

### Quick & Easy

Omahan Carolyn Sonderman recently underwent carpal tunnel surgery with Dr. Izadi. She attributes her carpal tunnel



Dr. Izadi prepares for the procedure.

issues to a 25-year career as a factory worker and her love of gardening.

"I had been having pain off and on for a few years, but I never thought it was that bad," Sonderman said. "But a carpal tunnel test determined my carpal tunnel in my left hand was severe to moderate and my right hand was moderate. The last few months my left hand was bothering me with tingling and a lot of pain at night."

**"The procedure is done so quickly and I didn't have to have general anesthetic. I really like that."**

— Carolyn Sonderman

Sonderman had her left carpal tunnel release on Dec. 8, 2011, and underwent the same procedure on her right on Jan. 26.

"The procedure is done so quickly and I didn't have to have general anesthetic," Sonderman said. "I really like that. After the surgery I was able to do things around the house as usual, which I liked as well."

### Convenient, Cost-Effective

While the small incision is a nice perk to the surgery, Izadi says the biggest advantage is the use of local anesthesia. Patients remain awake

during the procedure, preparations prior to surgery are minimal and the postoperative restrictions are nominal.

"If a patient is 'put under' for a procedure, they can't eat and drink prior, which can be problematic for someone who has diabetes," Dr. Izadi said. "In addition, the adverse risks associated with general anesthesia are increased for smokers, and those who suffer from conditions such as COPD and asthma. Patients undergoing general anesthesia have to be driven to and from the surgery center due to the lingering effects of the anesthesia, which can last up to 24 hours."

Using only a local anesthetic, patients can eat and drink up until their surgery, and they are able to drive themselves to and from the appointment.

"While all those advantages are important, another benefit is the cost," he said. "My patients don't have the added expense of another health care professional administering general anesthesia or the cost of the medication itself."

### Back To Work

Another plus, confirmed by Dr. Izadi's patients, is many return to work the same day, and the little pain or discomfort they may feel is controlled by an over-the-counter pain medication.

"My patients literally walk out of the operating room with a small soft bandage covering their incision," Dr. Izadi said. "Patients are limited on the amount they can lift with their hand, but are capable of completing their activities of daily living. The patient takes off the soft bandage after a couple of days and simply covers the incision with a Band-Aid until the stitches are removed, usually 10 days after the procedure."

### Not "Secretary's Disease"

Carpal tunnel syndrome (CTS) is a health issue that has been around for many years. Once believed to be a "secretary's disease," Dr. Izadi notes 5 percent or 1 in 20 people have CTS.

"Simply speaking, CTS is compression of the median nerve at the wrist," he said. "A person with CTS will experience numbness and tingling of their fingers and sometimes pain



Dr. Izadi and his team work through a tiny incision.

in the hand, forearm and arm. The numbness and tingling usually occur in the thumb, index, middle and ring fingers. Many patients will have these symptoms at night, but can also experience them during daily activities."

For many people, the exact cause of CTS is unknown. For some, CTS is the result of an injury or an underlying condition such as pregnancy, diabetes, hypothyroidism or arthritis. In rare cases, a tumor can compress the median nerve, resulting in CTS.

"What's important is identifying CTS early," Dr. Izadi said. "If symptoms go untreated a person can develop irreversible nerve damage resulting in loss of hand function. Constant numbness and atrophy are signs of severe CTS."

To schedule an appointment, call (402) 354-0707.

 Story by Claudia Bohm