

## Orthopaedic Specialties

1011 Jeffords Street, Suite C  
Clearwater, FL 33756

Phone: 727-446-5993



1011 Jeffords Street, Suite C  
Clearwater, FL 33756  
(727) 446-5993

1011 Jeffords Street, Suite D  
Clearwater, FL 33756  
(727) 449-2599



Volume 4, Issue 3  
Fall 2009

### PTAK Lecture Series 2009

Orthopaedic Specialties' lecture series continues through the end of 2009. Please join us for one or more of these informative lectures on orthopaedic health topics. Each talk will be presented at no charge by one of Orthopaedic Specialties' renowned physicians.

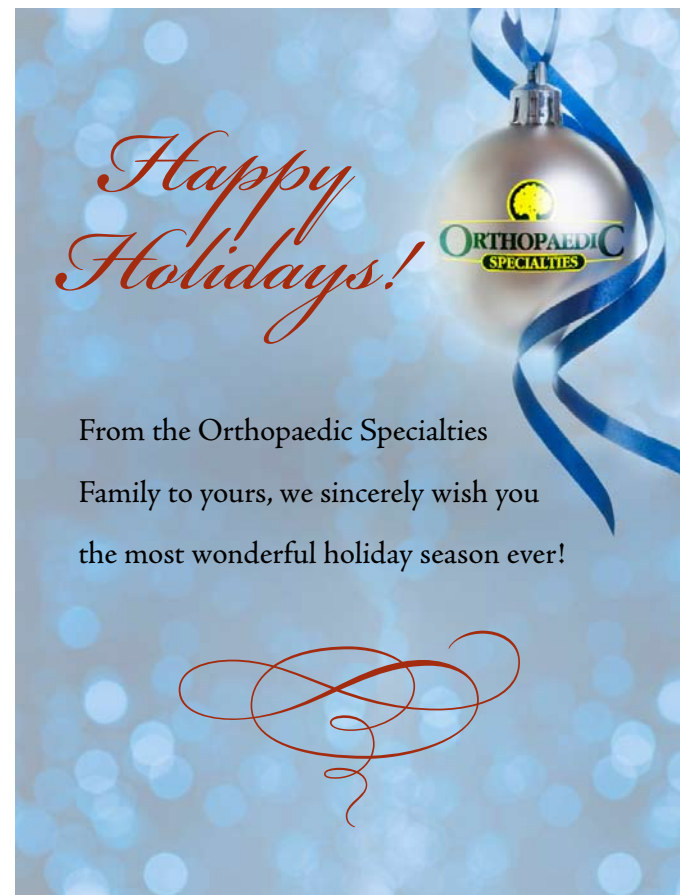
All lectures are through Morton Plant Hospital and held at PTAK Orthopaedic & Neuroscience Pavilion, 430 Morton Plant Street, Clearwater, Florida 33756 in Meeting Room 114. Each person needs to call (727) 462-7500 to reserve their seat and register for the lecture. Morton Plant Hospital will then send a confirmation letter with driving directions to the facility.



**Wednesday, December 2, 12:00 pm**  
**Dr. Piazza: "This Old Spine & My Sciatica, What's New for 2010"**



**Wednesday, December 16, 12:00 pm**  
**Dr. Abdo: "Hip & Knee Arthritis: From the Basics to the Latest Techniques"**



From the Orthopaedic Specialties  
Family to yours, we sincerely wish you  
the most wonderful holiday season ever!

## Orthopaedic Specialties' New Spine Center Now Open



**W**e are excited to announce that Orthopaedic Specialties' new Spine Center is now open. We have relocated it from the PTAK Orthopaedic and Neuroscience Pavilion to a newly-equipped suite directly adjacent to our Jeffords Street office.

In addition to offering the latest technological advantages for our patients, our new state-of-the-art facility provides outstanding comfort and convenience that will enable us to serve our patients' needs to a greater degree than ever before.

With the opening of the Spine Center on our Jeffords Street campus, Orthopaedic Specialties continues a tradition of more than four decades of dedication to outstanding patient care in Pinellas County.

The Orthopaedic Specialties Spine Center is open to the public Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. We invite you to stop by and visit our new facility. For more details, or to schedule an appointment, please call us at (727) 449-2599 and talk to any of our caring and knowledgeable team members.

### OUR TEAM OF PHYSICIANS



**George A. Morris III, MD**  
Treating patients of all ages for all types of orthopaedic problems.



**Michael R. Piazza, MD**  
Treating all types of orthopaedic problems; specializing in spine disorders.



**Richard V. Abdo, MD**  
Treating all types of orthopaedic problems; Specializing in foot & ankle conditions & sports medicine.



**W. Allen Hughes II, MD**  
Treating all types of orthopaedic problems; specializing in sports medicine.



**J. Byron Davidson, DO**  
Specializing in disorders of the spine.



**Howard L. Schuele, MD**  
Treating all types of orthopaedic problems.



**Anthony L. Marcotte, DO**  
Specializing in disorders of the hand, wrist, forearm, elbow and shoulder.

# Endoscopic Release

## Advances in Treatment for Carpal Tunnel Syndrome

by Anthony L. Marcotte, D.O.



### What is carpal tunnel syndrome?

Carpal tunnel syndrome (CTS) is a condition where the median nerve is pinched at the wrist. The carpal tunnel is a space in the wrist where the median nerve and nine tendons pass through. The median nerve gives feeling to the thumb, index, middle, and half of the ring finger. It also helps muscles in the thumb move.

### What causes carpal tunnel syndrome?

When increased pressure develops in the carpal tunnel, then the median nerve can get irritated and may cause numbness, tingling, and pain in the fingers, wrist, and arm. The precise cause of this increased pressure remains unknown. Some conditions, however, that can contribute to the development of CTS include diabetes, rheumatoid arthritis, thyroid disorders, pregnancy, fractures, and dislocations.

### How can I tell if I have carpal tunnel syndrome?

Typically, numbness and tingling are felt in the thumb, index, middle, and ring fingers. Due to the numbness in the fingertips, CTS can cause weakness in the hand, difficulty in buttoning a shirt, or trouble with handling small objects. Patients with CTS can wake suddenly from their sleep with pain and numbness. In severe cases, permanent muscle damage may result, as well as permanent loss of sensation in the fingertips.

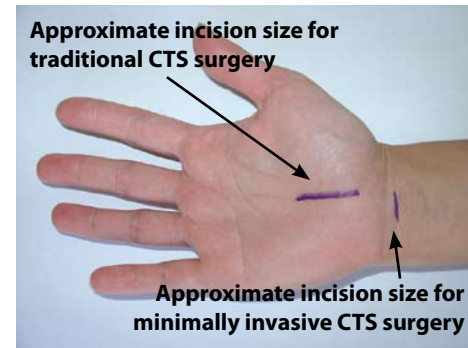
Your doctor can usually diagnose CTS with a detailed history and physical exam. An electromyogram with nerve conduction velocity test (EMG/NCV) is usually ordered to determine the severity of the pinched nerve, as well as determine if there has been any muscle damage. The EMG/NCV test can also diagnose other nerve problems. Sometimes, xrays are ordered.

### Treatment of carpal tunnel syndrome

Many of the symptoms of CTS can be relieved without surgery. Wearing splints to keep the wrist straight may reduce pressure on the nerve. Steroid injections can help reduce swelling in the carpal tunnel which also takes pressure off of the nerve. Identifying

and treating any underlying medical conditions may also help.

When symptoms do not improve, surgery may help take pressure off of the nerve by releasing the transverse carpal ligament.



### Endoscopic Carpal Tunnel Release

Carpal tunnel syndrome (CTS) is one of the most common reasons to see an orthopedic surgeon. When symptoms of carpal tunnel syndrome are not relieved with splinting, injections, or therapy, then surgery may alleviate the numbness and tingling in the fingers.

There are two ways that surgeons can treat CTS. One is the classic "open" technique where there is an incision in the palm over the carpal tunnel. A second and newer option is the minimally invasive technique of endoscopic carpal tunnel release. In this technique, an incision is made in the less sensitive forearm, near the wrist. Both open and endoscopic releases are safe and effective procedures when done by a surgeon properly trained and comfortable in the technique.

### Advantages of Endoscopic Surgery vs. Carpal Tunnel Release

- ▶ **Less pain**
- ▶ **Quicker recovery**
- ▶ **Quicker return to work/play**
- ▶ **Less noticeable scar**

Endoscopic carpal tunnel release is a minimally invasive way in which carpal tunnel syndrome can be treated. Our new Hand and Upper Extremity Surgeon, Dr. Anthony Marcotte, is fellowship trained in endoscopic carpal tunnel release and is the only surgeon in the Clearwater area able to provide the service.

### How is endoscopic tunnel release performed?

In the traditional open carpal tunnel release, an incision is made in the palm of the hand directly over the ligament. This skin has many nerve endings and can be quite sensitive for months after surgery.

Endoscopic release attempts to avoid this sensitive area in the palm by approaching the ligament from underneath. The incision is typically made in the wrist crease, thus making the scar less noticeable. Furthermore, by avoiding an incision in the palm, less dissection of the sensitive tissues is necessary, so patients experience less postoperative pain.

### Endoscopic release results in quicker recovery, less pain and scarring

When a carpal tunnel release is done endoscopically, patients typically recover quicker, have less pain and scarring, and return to work faster than with the open technique. In fact, patients recover in half the time as compared to open procedures.

With the minimally invasive endoscopic carpal tunnel release, patients report less pain during their recovery. Furthermore, by the first postoperative visit 10–14 days after the procedure, the scar is less tender as compared to open surgery. Patients are able to return to work and play 50% quicker than with open carpal tunnel surgery. On average, patients return to work 38 days after open release procedures, compared to 18 days when surgery is performed endoscopically.

# New State-of-the Art 'Live' Imaging Advantage

Orthopaedic Specialties has improved its surgical imaging capabilities by adding the GE OEC® 9900 Elite C-arm imaging system. Surgeons and patients will benefit from high quality, clear fluoroscopic images during surgery.

We are excited to now have the OEC 9900 Elite C-arm in our fleet of surgical equipment. The C-arm is a highly sophisticated system, which uses fluoroscopic x-rays to produce a 'live' image feed displayed on monitors during a wide range of surgical procedures ranging from bone fractures to hip replacement surgery. Think of fluoroscopy as an "x-ray movie" that helps us diagnose and treat patients by displaying the movement of a body part or of an instrument or dye (contrast agent) inside the body.

When contrast material is injected into the patient's body prior to a procedure, the targeted area becomes bright white when viewed with the OEC 9900 Elite C-arm. This allows

us to view internal organs in motion, as well as capture and store still images from the procedure. Images are stored electronically in our computer.

For more than three decades, GE Healthcare OEC has been a leader in mobile C-arm surgical imaging with 7 out of 10 surgeons choosing OEC to help them see inside the body during surgery. The newest OEC C-arm has improved power and cooling so the system can stay in use even during long procedures. It also features a Low Dose setting, which reduces dosage by more than 50% from the standard setting, and MTS technology which allows fewer



contrast injections for the patient during certain procedures. System reliability during surgery, less radiation exposure and reduced contrast all mean improved patient care during surgery.

The OEC 9900 Elite C-arm is yet another advantage that we offer our patients. For more details, please call us at 727-446-5993.

**Need Relief from Lumbar Spinal Stenosis?**

**Now you have options!**

Lumbar Spinal Stenosis (LSS) can be a painful and debilitating condition. If you feel you've lost some of your quality of life, please attend our **FREE PRESENTATION**. At this informative event you will:

- Learn more about Lumbar Spinal Stenosis
- Learn about innovative treatments & the latest technologies
- Meet other people with LSS

**Free PROGRAM**

1126

### Seminar Event Information

Presented by: **Dr. Byron Davidson**



**When: Saturday, December 5th**

**Time: 9:00 a.m.**

**Where: Orthopaedic Specialties Office**  
1011 Jeffords Street  
Clearwater, FL 33756



If you're tired of living with the pain, then join us for a highly informative discussion.

**To attend this FREE EVENT, please call: 727-490-0680.**

co-marketed by: **Medtronic**

© 2009 Medtronic Spine LLC. All rights reserved. 16001109-01