

HEALTH

Do You Have Carpal Tunnel?

There are ways to minimize the risk

You're working at your desk, trying to ignore the tingling or numbness you've had for months in your hand and wrist. Suddenly, a sharp, piercing pain shoots through the wrist and up your arm. Just a passing cramp? More likely you have carpal tunnel syndrome, a painful progressive condition caused by compression of a key nerve in the wrist.

Many things can help minimize a person's risk for carpal tunnel. Strategies include performing hand and wrist exercises, preventing wrist injury at work, and relaxing the grip. People with jobs that have awkward wrist positions and repetitive hand movements are at increased risk for carpal tunnel.

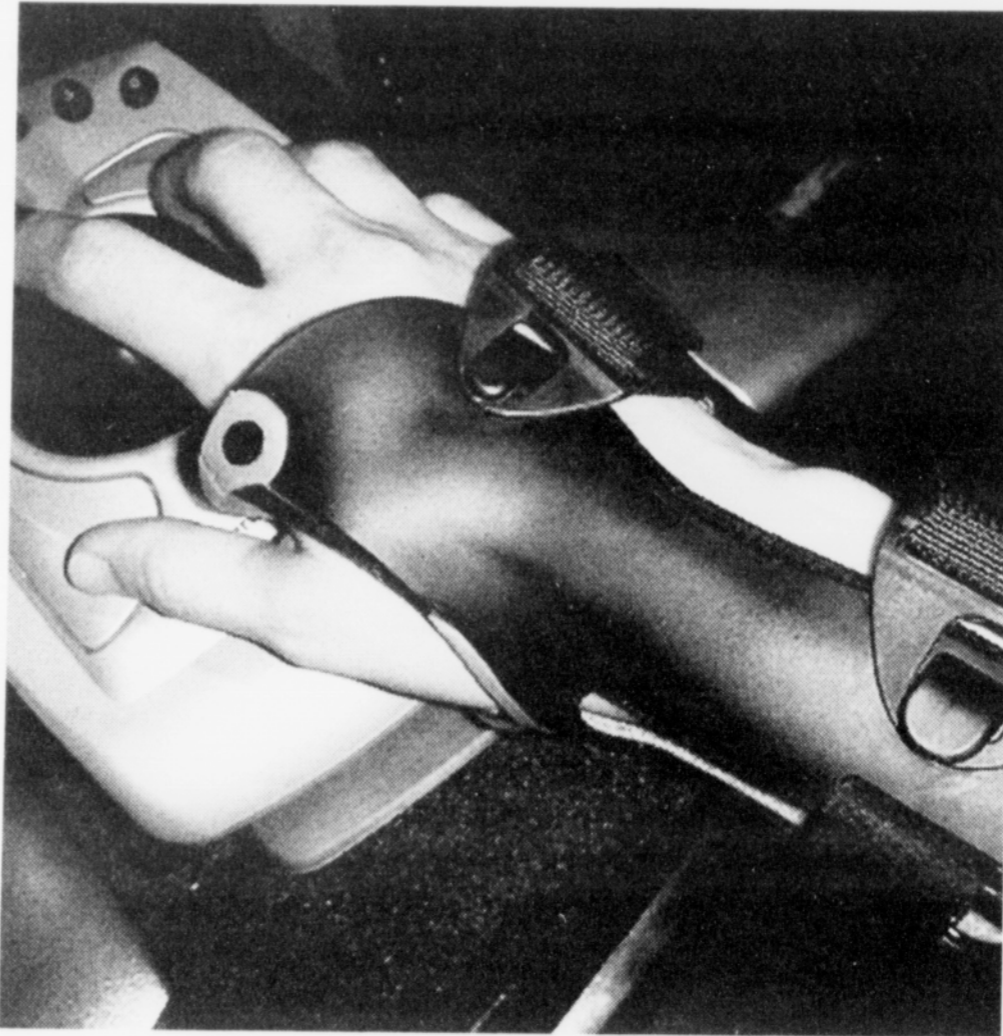
Prevention in the workplace is focused on ways to relieve these positions. These include varying your tasks, performing exercises, relaxing the grip and keeping your

fingers warm.

To do this, make sure that your workspace and equipment are at the right height and distance for your hands and wrist to work with less strain. If you are working on a computer, the keyboard should be at a height that allows your wrist to rest comfortably without having to bend at an angle. Desk or table workspace should be about 27 to 29 inches above the floor for most people.

It also helps to keep your elbows close to your sides as you type to reduce the strain on your forearm. Keeping good posture and wrist position can lower your risk of getting carpal tunnel syndrome.

Avoid repetitive movements, if possible. Try to perform tasks that use different muscle movements during each hour. Break up tasks that require repetitive wrist and hand motion with those that do not.



A brace to keep the wrist straight can help reduce the pain from Carpal Tunnel Syndrome.

After doing repetitive movements for a while, you can sometimes cancel out the effects of those movements by flexing and bending your wrists and hands in the opposite direction.

Sometimes, people get into a habit of tensing muscles without needing to -- or realizing it. Practice hand and wrist motions more gently and less tightly. Stress and tension play a role in muscle strain and irritation.

Muscles that are warm are less likely to get hurt, and the risk of getting carpal tunnel syndrome is greater in a cold environment. It is important to keep your hands warm while you work, even if you must wear fingerless gloves.

Incorporating ergonomic solutions, such as ergonomically designed tools, tool handles, and workstations that keep a more natural wrist position, is ideally the first step in carpal tunnel prevention.

Weight Loss Scams Hurt

A common resolution for the New Year is to lead a more healthy life and lose some of the excess weight gained from holiday revelries. It is especially during this time of year that scammers exploit our desire to slim-down with phony products that claim to help you lose weight with little to no effort.

Many weight loss scams suggest you can achieve "great results" without exercise or modifying your diet.

At best, fad diets and fake health products might result in short-term temporary weight loss but can be dangerous if followed over a longer period.

In 2009, over 300 Oregon consumers received refunds totaling more than \$180,000 from owners of the defunct diet chain LA Weight Loss Franchise Company based on a settlement reached by the Oregon Department of Justice.

The lawsuit alleged that the company had no competent and reliable

Tips to avoid phony products

scientific evidence to back up health claims about their "dietary supplements," including that one normalized blood pressure.

Attorney General John Kroger offers the following tips to spot weight loss scams. You should proceed with caution if a product demonstrates one of the following:

- *Lacks scientific evidence or a demonstrated link between the product and the promoted health benefits.

- *Sold only through the internet, individuals, telemarketers, mail, or on television.

- *Claims fast weight loss without exercise or diet.

- *Uses terms such as "miraculous breakthrough" and "effortless."

- *Promotes one particular ingredient as the central factor for success.

- *Demands large advance payments, or requires you enter into long-term contracts.

The Oregon Department of Justice is committed to keeping fraudulent businesses and products out of Oregon. If you or someone you know has fallen victim to a health product or weight loss scam, contact the Consumer Hotline at 1-877-877-9392. Don't let the scammers foil your New Year's resolutions.



Dr. Billy R. Flowers

THE SPINA COLUMN™

An ongoing series of questions and answers about America's natural healing profession.

Part 21. Chiropractic VS Fatigue: Climbing the stairs to a new you, two steps at a time.

Q: I feel exhausted all the time. I don't want to take "pep" pills because of addiction possibilities. What can I do?

A: I have a good friend and patient who only a year ago at the age of 61 loved life but has a tremendous concern. He became fatigued so easily that any activity would leave

him exhausted. The interesting point with him was that he practiced excellent health habits. Nonetheless he got to the point where exercise was nearly impossible. He still climbed the steps at work

but would have to stop halfway up to catch his breath before continuing. I persuaded him to look to Chiropractic for increased vitality. At first he could not see a correlation between his nerves and his Energy level. I told him that it was virtually one and the same. Our nerves are the highways of energy

in the body. If the nerves are trapped or irritated, our energy will be drained as well. He took my advice and now instead of stopping halfway, he charges up the stairs, two steps at a time! If your vitality is giving up at the halfway mark, get charged up with Chiropractic. It's a natural!

Flowers' Chiropractic Office

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Doctor Joins Portland Clinic

The Portland Clinic is welcoming Dr. Mural Nishikawa to its downtown office.

Dr. Nishikawa earned her medical degree from the Medical College of Pennsylvania and Hahnemann University School of Medicine. She completed her residency at Legacy Emanuel and Good Samaritan Hospitals in Portland.

Nishikawa is board certified in Internal Medicine and is an affiliate of the Oregon Medical Association. She also has a special interest in Preventative Medicine and Chronic Disease Management.

In her spare time, she enjoys yoga, travel, reading and cooking.



Dr. Mural Nishikawa