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If You Have Carpal Tunnel Symptoms, Better Check Your Thyroid

Thursday, August 20, 2009 by: Kerri Knox, RN, citizen journalist
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(NaturalNews) Carpal Tunnel Syndrome affects millions of people every year. With increasing use of computers, more and more people each year seek medical attention for the wrist pain, numbness and tingling that characterize Carpal Tunnel Syndrome. While surgery is often done for cases that don't respond to physical therapy, it's unknown how many people could avoid unnecessary surgery every year if only their **THYROID** problems were addressed first.

Carpal Tunnel Syndrome is usually defined as an 'impingement' of the median nerve that runs down the wrist. According to doctors, strain and repetitive motion causes inflammation of the connective tissue that surrounds this nerve running through your wrist into your hand; surgery is often indicated as a treatment to 'release' the impingement on this nerve. But Carpal Tunnel Syndrome is simply a collection of symptoms and not a disease itself. As with many 'Syndromes', there can be different causes for similar symptoms and 'nerve impingement' is not the only cause of these symptoms.

As unlikely as it may sound, the symptom of an under active thyroid gland, termed hypothyroid, can show up as symptoms of 'Carpal Tunnel Syndrome'. This was actually discovered by accident when patients with [hypothyroidism](#) suddenly found their [carpal tunnel syndrome](#) symptoms disappearing. While it **SOUNDS** easy to have a doctor simply check a person's thyroid levels before they consider surgery for carpal tunnel syndrome, it's not always that simple.

"Especially in the treatment of entrapment neuropathy in hypothyroidism, the chance of medical treatment must be given to patients before considering surgical treatment."

'Hormone replacement therapy in hypothyroidism and nerve conduction study'

Unfortunately, hypothyroid isn't necessarily easy to diagnose. Even though the [blood](#) tests are readily available, doctors generally only look at **ONE** of the many different thyroid tests that are available. If this Thyroid Stimulating Hormone (TSH) is normal, then the doctor will determine that hypothyroidism is not present and will not check the many other thyroid hormones and antibodies that can be tested. But in the case of some study participants who had carpal tunnel syndrome, the majority who benefited from hypothyroid treatment actually had completely normal TSH levels. But these lucky carpal tunnel sufferers had **ALL** their levels analyzed and were diagnosed with 'Subclinical Hypothyroid', qualified for the more conservative medical treatment that eliminated their 'Carpal Tunnel Syndrome' and avoided unnecessary surgery.

Not only does **Underactive** thyroid cause Carpal Tunnel Symptoms, but **Overactive** thyroid can cause these **Same** symptoms. And just like with hypothyroid, treatment for hyperthyroid also prevented what would have been surgical cases. In the article '[Carpal tunnel syndrome and hyperthyroidism: A prospective study](#)' the authors state, "CTS can be considered another peripheral neurological manifestation associated with hyperthyroidism." Yet instead of routinely screening patients for subtle [health](#) problems before surgery, doctors rarely check for these problems. In fact, one study that reviewed all of the literature available on metabolic causes of carpal tunnel syndrome concluded that "there is insufficient evidence for routine laboratory screening" in patients with carpal tunnel syndrome.

Certainly, for those who end up having an unnecessary and unsuccessful surgery, there is not 'insufficient evidence'. But

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until routine screenings with the simple and readily available blood tests are being done, it will be impossible to know how many people receive unnecessary carpal tunnel surgery every year. Given that there are always a percentage of people who don't improve with carpal tunnel surgery, it's evident that some of these surgical 'Non Responders' might have benefited far more from having some simple and inexpensive screening procedures for thyroid problems before having surgery.

Resources

- 1) <http://www.sciencedirect.com/scienc...>
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About the author

Kerri Knox, RN is a Registered Nurse and Functional Medicine Practitioner. With over 14 years of experience in health care, she has the unique perspective of being solidly grounded in Conventional Medicine and being well versed in Alternative Medicine. She can help you to find and repair the **UNDERLYING CAUSES** of illness using cutting edge in home lab testing that finds nutritional deficiencies, hidden infections and chemical and metal toxicities that contribute to ill health. She has a private practice in the San Francisco Bay Area, but works primarily by **Telephone Consultation** so that she can help you wherever you happen to live in the US. She can be reached through her website at: <http://www.easy-immune-health.com> "Finally Be Well Again!"

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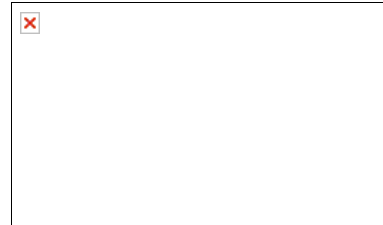
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