

WHEENK! HEALTH

INTRODUCING MIKI BERNAL

WHEENK! HAS THE SERVICES OF A CERTIFIED HAND THERAPIST ON STAFF. MIKI BERNAL HAS BEEN CERTIFIED SINCE 1991 AND HAS TREATED A VARIETY OF COMMON AND COMPLEX HAND AND ARM CONDITIONS.

AT TIMES TREATMENT OF COMMON HAND AND WRIST PROBLEMS CAN BE GREATLY HELPED BY A CONSULTATION OR A FEW VISITS OF THERAPY. CONSERVATIVE TREATMENT CAN SOMETIMES AVOID FURTHER MORE INVASIVE TREATMENTS. IN THIS ARTICLE WE WILL DISCUSS TWO COMMON NERVE COMPRESSIONS.

CARPAL TUNNEL SYNDROME IS COMPRESSION OF THE MEDIAN NERVE AT THE WRIST. IT IS MOST COMMONLY CAUSED BY REPETITIVE USE OF THE FINGERS AND THUMB FOR GRIPPING AND HOLDING SMALL OBJECTS. IT CAN ALSO BE CAUSED BY TRAUMA, SWELLING, OR A SYSTEMIC DISEASE. PAIN, NUMBNESS AND TINGLING IN THE THUMB, INDEX, MIDDLE AND PART OF THE RING FINGER IS FREQUENT. IT IS NOT UNCOMMON TO WAKE UP DURING THE NIGHT WITH HAND PAIN.

CUBITAL TUNNEL SYNDROME IS COMPRESSION OF THE ULNAR NERVE AT THE ELBOW. PEOPLE MAY FEEL NUMBNESS AND TINGLING OF THE LITTLE AND RING FINGERS.

BOTH OF THESE SYNDROMES HAVE BEEN KNOWN TO RESPOND VERY WELL TO CONSERVATIVE TREATMENT. THIS MAY INCLUDE SPLINTING, PADDING OVER THE NERVE TO PREVENT DIRECT TRAUMA OR PRESSURE, AND PREVENTION OF PROLONGED STRETCH OF THE NERVE. SLEEPING IN THE FETAL POSITION CAN COMPRESS BOTH THE MEDIAN AND ULNAR NERVES. EDUCATION IS IMPORTANT. THERE ARE PROPER STRETCHES OF THE NERVE. ERGONOMIC CHANGES OF WORK STATIONS IS A MAJOR FACTOR. MOST OF US USE OUR COMPUTERS TO KEEP IN TOUCH WITH OUR FRIENDS AND FAMILY AND WE LOSE TRACK OF TIME. WE HOLD OUR HANDS AND WRISTS IN TOO MUCH EXTENSION OR REST OUR ELBOWS ON HARD SURFACES. PROPER BODY MECHANICS CAN MINIMIZE SYMPTOMS. THERE ARE FLEXIBILITY EXERCISES FOR THE FINGERS AND ELBOW. THERE ARE SIMPLE WAYS TO REDUCE SWELLING AND INCREASE BLOOD FLOW.

WHEENK! OFFERS A CONSULTATION APPOINTMENT AT NO CHARGE. MIKI WILL BE GLAD TO TALK TO YOU ABOUT YOUR SYMPTOMS AND OFFER YOU SUGGESTIONS FOR REDUCING PAIN.

BY MIKI BERNAL, MA, OTR, CHT

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