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Connections

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Carpal tunnel syndrome: relief is at hand

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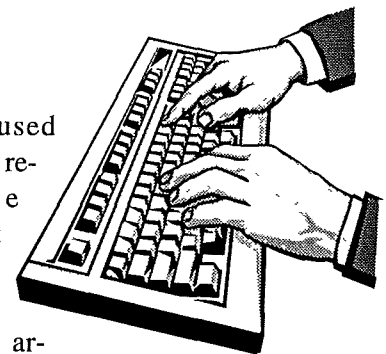
Carpal tunnel syndrome (CTS), a painful disorder of the wrist and hand, has lately been the subject of much publicity and even litigation, when injured workers have taken employers to court. CTS is one of many injuries caused by repeated strain, such as that produced by working long hours at a computer, and it's on the rise. Thousands of cases are diagnosed each year. One contributing factor, according to Dr. David Rempel of the University of California at San Francisco, is the ever-accelerating pace of work. New electronic technologies, rather than lightening the load, only increase the demand for getting things done in a hurry.

Some background

Deriving its name from the Greek karpos, or wrist, the carpal tunnel is the passageway, composed of bone and ligament, through which a major nerve system of the forearm passes into the hand. The carpal tunnel is like a cable for the median nerve and nine tendons. The nerve supplies sensation and controls the muscles in part of the hand, and the tendons allow the fingers to flex. The wear and tear of repeated movement may thicken the lubricating membrane of the tendons, increasing pressure inside the carpal tunnel and pressing the nerve up against the bone. This process, called nerve entrapment,

can be caused not only by repetitive strain, but by bone dislocation

or fracture, arthritis, diabetes or fluid retention (as may occur in pregnancy) - anything that narrows the tunnel and compresses the nerve and tendons.



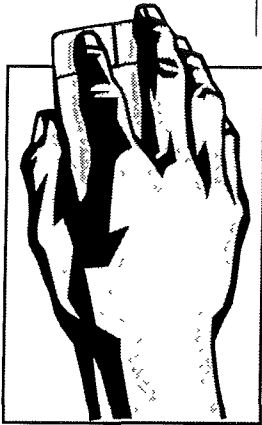
This pain-in-the-hand used to be called anything from "writer's cramp" to "washerwoman's thumb." Carpenters, dentists, piano players, and any of those who work with their hands can get CTS. So can tennis and squash players and people who frequently use rowing machines or other exercise equipment. Women are far more susceptible to it than men because women tend to do the kinds of industrial, office, and domestic jobs that promote CTS - and their carpal tunnel space is smaller to begin with.

Symptoms to watch out for

What are the signs? These include burning, tingling, and numbness in your hand that bother you early in the morning or awaken you at night. Indeed, nocturnal hand pain has

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Carpal tunnel syndrome *(continued from page 1)*



been called the hallmark of CTS. Flexing your hand in your sleep or sleeping on it may aggravate the discomfort. If you need to take aspirin or another pain reliever in order to keep working, that should be a signal to see a physician. If left untreated, the tingling and numbness can progress to a weakened grip and severe pain in the forearm or shoulder. By all means, get medical advice before this happens.

Treating carpal tunnel syndrome

CTS should not be difficult to diagnose for a doctor experienced in this kind of injury, but you may still need to go to neurologist for an electrodiagnostic test, which checks the nerve's ability to transmit impulses. You and your doctor should figure out what activity is causing CTS and try to alleviate the causes. If your condition is mild, wearing a splint at night may be all you need. Your doctor may prescribe periods of rest and advise you to avoid anything that might constrict small blood vessels in the hands, such as caffeinated beverages or smoking.

Anti-inflammatory drugs such as aspirin or ibuprofen and/or injections of cortisone can help. Icing the wrist can relieve pain. If nerve injury or muscle damage progresses, surgery may prove advisable. Surgery is usually successful in restoring full hand function unless the condition has been present for several years.

The marketplace is full of devices - wrist braces, back rests, wrist rests, forearm supports, wrist trolleys, and fingerless gloves - that supposedly head off CTS or help correct it. But there's no evidence, except testimonials, that any of them are worth much. Dr. Steve Johnson, Professor of Industrial Engineering at the University of Arkansas, thinks

that wrist supports may actually decrease circulation to the wrist, or restrict movement in such a way as to transfer your problems from your wrist to shoulder.

How can I avoid carpal tunnel syndrome?

- When working with your hands, keep your wrists straight. Flexing and twisting them stresses the carpal tunnel.
- Lift objects with your whole hand - or better yet, with both hands - to reduce stress on the wrist.
- Make sure your work station is comfortable. If you're working at a computer keyboard, make sure your fingers are lower than your wrists; don't rest the heels of your hands on the keyboard.
- Avoid working in the cold. If your hands are cold, that means blood flow to the wrist is reduced, which can promote CTS.
- Type with a soft touch - don't pound the keys.
- If your hands hurt while you're on the rowing machine, for instance, or while playing a racket sport, ease up. Pain is always a signal to stop. If you carry hand weights while running or exercising, make sure they aren't too heavy.
- Take breaks frequently when working with your hands. Working too rapidly may contribute to the problem. And try some simple wrist exercises while you're taking your break.

Reprinted from the University of California at Berkeley Wellness Letter, January 1995

Transition Counsellor appointed

New position created at VCC will provide assistance to students with disabilities leaving the college and preparing for the transition to employment.

Services for Students with Disabilities in the King Edward and City Centre Counselling Departments are pleased to announce the appointment of Mr. Ron Kee to the position of Transition Counsellor.

Ron is no stranger to Vancouver Community College as he has provided casual relief at the City Centre Counselling Department for the past three years. Ron is a graduate of UBC and successfully completed a practicum with Services for Students with Disabilities at City Centre in 1992 as part of the requirements for completing a Masters in Counselling. In addition, Ron was a counsellor at the Open Learning Agency before coming to the College.

The position of Transition Counsellor is a new one. Funds for this position were made available through the Skills Now initiative of the Ministry of Skills, Training and Labour.

The Transition Counsellor's primary responsibility is to provide assistance to students with disabilities who are exiting Vancouver Community College programs. Specifically, the Transition Counsellor is responsible for preparing students for an active job search. The Counsellor is also responsible for providing personal counselling as it relates to job search. Whenever possible, the Transi-

tion Counsellor will work in partnership with community based agencies to which these students may have access to. The primary focus of the position will be to provide service to students with disabilities who are not associated with or eligible for assistance from established employment and job search agencies. As part of this initiative, students will be able to access ongoing support upon completion of their studies at VCC. However, we are encouraging students to take advantage of this new initiative well in advance of their completion dates in order to adequately prepare for the rigours of job search.

Ron is available to liaise between students and instructors, department heads, and others, as appropriate. If you want to know more about this position, or you have suggestions as to how the Transition Counsellor might best serve students with disabilities within your department, or you have a student with a disability who might benefit from these services, please feel free to contact Ron by telephone (443-8445), TTY (443-8588) or e mail (rkee@vcc.bc.ca).

City Centre students can also be referred to Ron via Wayne Avery (443-8449) or Dolores Callaghan (443-8440). King Edward students can be referred to the service via Mel Felker (871-7206).

The Transition Counsellor is available on Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays. Ron's office is located in the Counselling Department at City Centre. Ron will commute to King Edward if a student prefers to meet with him at that location.



Connections will be on holidays,

burning burgers and sipping iced tea, during the month of August, returning the first week after Labour Day. Everyone will no doubt be pulling together all sorts of interesting articles and features for the fall issues of Connections. I look forward to hearing from you. Enjoy the rest of the summer, everyone!

Win Big! Think Big!

Get your tickets now for the Educational Foundation's 1995 Truck Lottery. You could win this year's Grand Prize, a top of the line, custom built 1996 Western Star transport truck, retail value \$120,000. This year's Grand Prize, along with the \$1,000 second prize and \$500 third prize, will be drawn on October 27, 1995. Proceeds from the lottery will benefit VCC students through scholarships, bursaries and equipment upgrades.

Don't forget the two Early Bird Draws of \$250 cash each, taking place on August 15 and September 15, 1995. Early Bird Draw winners are eligible for all draws.

Tickets are \$100 each, with only 2,500 available. To purchase a ticket, fill out and return the form below to Veronika Metchie, VCC Educational Foundation, 5th Floor, KEC. For more information, contact the Foundation, at telephone 871-7173 or fax 871-7200. Good luck!

Yes!

I want to win the VCC Educational Foundation
1996 Western Star Truck!



☐ Mr. ☐ Mrs. ☐ Ms. ☐ Miss

Name _____

Home Address _____

City _____ Province _____ Postal Code _____

Phone: (Res) _____ (Bus) _____

Please send me _____ ticket(s) at \$100 each.

☐ Enclosed is my cheque payable to VCC Educational Foundation.

I prefer to pay by: ☐ Visa ☐ Mastercard

Card # _____

Name on card _____ Expiry Date _____

Signature _____



Last date of ticket sales: October 26th, 1995

Draw date: October 27th, 1995



Pagemaker Tips 'n Tricks

Save, save, save

To ensure that you do not accidentally lose changes to your publication, save often and make backup copies of your documents.

If you make changes to your publication that you later regret, you can remove those changes, as well as the mini-saved version, by choosing "Revert" from the File menu. To revert to the last mini-saved version, hold Shift while you choose "Revert." PageMaker prompts you to confirm or cancel this command.

Prefer different tabs?

If the tabs you use most often are different from PageMaker's default tab positions, reset the defaults by setting your own tabs in the "Indents/tabs" dialog when no publication is open.

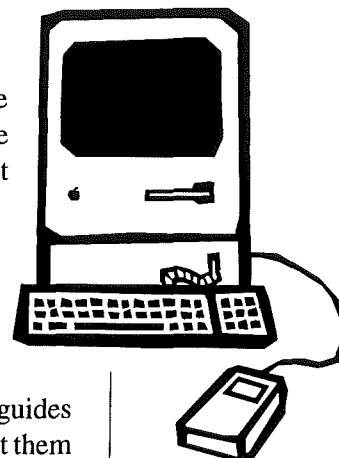
To change the default tab settings for a single publication, use the pointer tool to reset the tabs when that publication is open but no text is selected.

Triple-click to a Story

Triple-clicking a text block with the pointer tool is the same as selecting the text block and choosing "Edit story": it opens a story window.

Column guides

If all or most of the pages in your publication have the same number of columns, create the column guides on the master pages. Then set the column guides separately on the pages where you want them to be different.



Myths and Facts

MYTH *You can learn while you sleep*

FACT The evidence says you can't, according to a new report called *Learning, Remembering, Believing* by the National Research Council (NRC). Subliminal tapes—the kind that whisper a message while you sleep or listen to music—have been around for years. There are tapes that claim to help you learn French, quit smoking, lose weight, or improve work habits. Supporters of the subliminal theory fail to mention that double-blind tests have consistently shown that these products fail to produce their claimed effects. Nevertheless, one survey shows that

68% of the public believes in the usefulness of subliminal tapes, which are a multimillion-dollar business.

Even if some degree of "sleep learning" were possible, the NRC report concluded, the knowledge would be spotty and probably inaccessible during waking hours. In addition, instead of making you smarter, attempts at nocturnal learning may make you dumber by interfering with the deepest, most restorative stages of sleep and thus impairing mental performance the next day.

Asia Pacific/Mexico Awards

For students

The program provides financial support for award recipients attending rigorous programs of study in Asia or Mexico.

For professional staff

The program provides financial support enabling recipients to work in an educational institution in Asia or Mexico.

For further information and application forms, contact Cecily May at 871-7178, or the B.C. Centre for International Education at 895-5070.

Deadline for applications: **November 1st, February 1st**

Please inform your students/colleagues of these awards. It's not too early to start preparing now to meet the November 1st deadline, as it takes time to acquire the necessary documentation from the foreign institution.

Asia Pacific Grant Program:

This program provides small grants to enable students to participate in an organized related program of study at an overseas institution, for example, practice-teaching ESL and studying Thai at an institution in Thailand. If this fits in with a current or potential program in your department, please contact Cecily May at 871-7178, or the B.C. Centre for International Education at 895-5070 for further information.

Deadline for applications: November 1st, February 1st



All sunshine
makes the desert.

—Arabian
proverb

calendar

Join VCC International Education for The Symphony of Fire Grand Finale!

Wednesday, August 9 from 9:00 p.m. to 12:00 midnight aboard the 50 foot motor launch the Gostosa. Cruise around English Bay and have a perfect view of the fireworks' Grand Finale. Tickets are \$25.00 per person, available until July 27 from the KEC cashier. Space is limited, so reserve your spot today!

Facilitators needed for parent support groups.

This is an excellent volunteer opportunity. The B.C. Parents in Crisis Society is offering intensive initial and ongoing training in self-help philosophy, group dynamics and communication skills. If you have good listening and interpersonal skills, basic understanding of child development, and would like to work with parents to improve their relationships, call the B.C. Parents in Crisis Society at 669-1616 or 1-800-665-6880. Training Starts September 29-October 1, 1995.

announcements

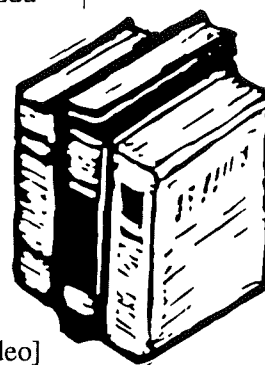
New Books in CC Library

- Arithmetic the Easy Way
- Better Speeches in Ten Simple Steps
- Build Your Own LAN and Save a Bundle
- Commercial Effects of NAFTA on the Canadian Economy
- Counting Ourselves In: A Women's Community Economic Development Handbook
- The Elements of E-mail Style
- Faculty Guide for Teaching Postsecondary Students
- Finding it on the Internet
- Hi-Tech Jobs for Lo-Tech People
- The Illustrated Encyclopedia of Costume and Fashion
- Interviewing
- The Internet for Dummies
- The Internet Yellow Pages
- Mastering Excel 5 for Windows
- Mosaic for Dummies
- Pacific Flavors
- Photoshop 3 for MACs for Dummies
- QuarkXPress 3.3 For Dummies
- Windows 3.11 for Dummies

New Materials in CC Library

- 9 to 5 Survival Guide [video]
- Accounting and Office Systems [video]
- ADD and the College Student
- Aspects of Caring [video]
- Autocad for Dummies
- Bowes & Church's Food Values of Portions Commonly Used
- Building a Medical Vocabulary
- Buttons
- Career Coach
- Complete Guide to Home Automation
- Computers in the Dental Office: How to Evaluate, Select and Get the Most Out of Your System
- Did You Get My Message? [video]
- Dotto on Data [video]

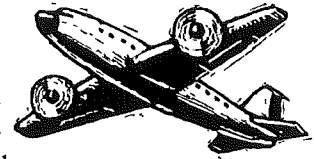
- Entrepreneur's Guide to Building a Better Business Plan: a Step-by-Step Approach
- Essential Runner
- Food Service and Hospitality [video]
- Fundamentals of Professional Food Preparation: a Laboratory Text-Workbook
- Getting it Printed
- Gold Jewellery Buying Guide
- Graphic Design: A Career Guide and Education Directory
- How Macs Work
- Lenk's Television Handbook: Operation and Troubleshooting
- Master Handbook of Electronic Tables and Formulas
- Medical Assistant
- Memory Management in a Multimedia World
- MS-DOS 6.0: Introductory Skills [video]
- Nutrition & Diet Therapy
- Quick Solutions for Great Type Combinations
- Robert Mondavi Presents Cooking & Entertaining with America's Rising Star Chefs
- Tale of "O": On Being Different [video]
- Teach Yourself...Unix
- TV Repair for Beginners
- WordPerfect 6.1 for Windows for Dummies
- Working Together: Succeeding in a Multicultural Organization



B.C. Hydro's Fitness Centre

at 333 Dunsmuir St. is now open, with the latest in strength training equipment, free weights, machines, cardiovascular equipment and exercise classes for all fitness levels and preferences. For more information phone: 623-3886

Don't miss the plane!



Last call for International Opportunities. If you are interested in international project work and have not yet submitted the Questionnaire and/or your resume, *don't delay*. IE is now tabulating the information and will be registering the College's and its employees' credentials with the International Funding Agencies by the end of September. Since this process is time consuming and costly it will only be done once a year. ***You will not be registered unless you respond by September 15, 1995.*** For a copy of the questionnaire or more information, call Hilary Wong at 7490 or Fred Wuhrer at 7492.

Connections

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7158

Please recycle
this newsletter.



classifieds

FOR SALE

Large 1 bedroom condo on Wall Street in Vancouver. Corner suite with over 700 sq.ft., ocean view and wraparound balcony. \$135,000 call 251-3559 for more information.

JOB POSTINGS

Clerk Cashier (c), Registrar's Office, KEC. Closing: Aug. 1.

Instructional Assistant (d), ESL Outreach Dept., KEC. (14/35 basis). Closing: Aug. 3.

Senior Secretary, Business and Computer Applications Division and Health Sciences Division, CC. Closing: Aug. 3.

Math or Computer Science Instructor, Saint John's College - Bangkok, Thailand (Opportunity for Asia-Pacific Award)

Saint John's College is a private education institution situated in the outskirts of Bangkok, Thailand, with which both the B.C. Ministry of Education and several post-secondary institutions in B.C. have developed a linkage over the past several years. The time period of this position is from November 1st, 1995 - October 1996, and the deadline for applications is September 1st. Although Saint John's can provide a rent-free condominium close to the campus and local transportation, they cannot provide a salary. However, interested applicants are invited to apply for the B.C. Asia Pacific College Scholars' Award which can offer an award of \$8,600.00 to subsidize the travel and living expenses of a suitably qualified applicant.

The awards committee will hold a special meeting so that the successful applicant(s) can be informed of their award in September.

For a copy of the complete job description and an awards application form, please contact **Cecily May** at 871-7178.

The fine print

Connections is published every Thursday, and the deadline for submissions is 3:00 pm on the previous Friday. Please supply your article to Manijeh or Ngee-Moi in a simple, word-processed format (text only is best) on an IBM-compatible disk, and include a hardcopy. The editor reserves the right to edit submissions for clarity and length, when necessary.