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RETURN TO WORK AFTER CARPAL TUNNEL RELEASE SURGERY WITH POST-OPERATIVE INTERVENTION: A SYSTEMATIC REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

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Background

Carpal tunnel syndrome is caused by entrapment of the median nerve at the wrist (1).

Recommended treatment for carpal tunnel syndrome includes surgical and conservative. Carpal tunnel release (CTR) surgery is indicated for persistent symptoms (2). Post-operative interventions can be combined with CTR surgery to reduce recovery time including timescales to return to work (RTW). Meta-analyses have used RTW as an outcome measure to compare effectiveness of different types of surgical procedure (3). Further systematic review has assessed RTW times following CTR surgery with occupational factors (4). Additional reviews (5) focus on post-surgical interventions and outcomes although RTW was not reviewed as an outcome measure.

Aims

To provide an overview of time to RTW after CTR surgery combined with post-operative intervention.

To provide some guidance for a safe and effective return to work after carpal tunnel surgery with post-operative interventions.

Methods

The review was registered with PROSPERO. A systematic review of the literature with the search criteria of carpal tunnel surgery with post-operative intervention and time to return to work.

Results

711 papers were identified through search of the literature. 7 randomised controlled trials matched the inclusion criteria and were included in the analysis. Range for reported return to work times was 15–108 days. Five studies clearly detailed return to work times between groups mean = 29.6 days and median = 24 days.

Conclusions

This systematic review highlights the variation in time to RTW after carpal tunnel release (CTR) surgery and post-operative intervention.

References:

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