

Patient-Reported Outcomes Following Bilateral Simultaneous Carpal Tunnel Release

Introduction

Simultaneous bilateral carpal tunnel release has been shown to be a safe and effective procedure. Current literature includes patient-reported outcomes data primarily regarding basic ADL's, return to work, efficacy, and complications. We seek to obtain patient-reported outcomes data for a broad spectrum of early postoperative function following simultaneous bilateral carpal tunnel release, including heavy ADL's, social limitations, and high-level function including return to sports and musical instruments.

Methods

A cohort of patients was retrospectively identified who had undergone simultaneous bilateral carpal tunnel release by a single surgeon at an academic center. An online survey was sent to patients to determine early postoperative function, with questions regarding heavy ADL's, social limitations, return to work, and high-level function including return to sports and musical instruments.

Results

25 patients were identified. Survey responses are currently ongoing and include 8 responses at this time. Responses to questions regarding heavy ADL's, social limitations, return to work, and sports/instruments were recorded for one-week and six-week postop time-points. During the first week postoperatively, patients experienced moderate to severe difficulty with heavy ADL's, and noted slight interference with social activities. At six weeks postoperatively, patients experienced mild to no difficulty with heavy ADLs, and slight to no interference with social activities. Median return to work (in any capacity) was 4 days. 50% of patients had returned to sport/instrument with usual technique by 6 weeks. Mean satisfaction was 9.6/10.

Conclusions

Patient-reported outcomes following simultaneous bilateral carpal tunnel release demonstrate difficulty during the first postoperative week, but significant improvement in the early postoperative period. Early results from a subset of patients indicated significant difficulty with heavy ADL's during the first postoperative week. However, by 6 weeks, impact on ADL's and social activities is minimal. Median return to work is less than one week, and patient satisfaction is high.