



Health Matters

the Gordon H. Grannis Chiropractic Clinic, Inc. Patient Newsletter

Spinal Stenosis

What it is, what can be done about it

Stenosis is a painful condition caused by degenerative narrowing of the spinal canal causing squeezing of the spinal nerves, pain, numbness, and weakness in the legs. A classic sign of stenosis is increasing pain with standing or walking, relief with sitting or adopting a forward tilting posture while upright.

A recent study compared treatment consisting of a) manipulation with treadmill walking to b) standard low back exercises/walking/ultrasound. About 2/3 of the group receiving manipulation improved, compared to only 40% of the exercise group.

And on a related note: How valuable are MRIs and nerve studies in predicting which patients with stenosis would improve without surgery? It was found that although they can aid as diagnostic tools, neither are useful in predicting the likelihood of success of surgery for stenosis. Hence the cost may not be worth it, and the false-positive study results may inadvertently lead some patients to unnecessary surgery.

Plantar Fasciitis

When you first get up in the morning, and start to stand up, does your foot feel like it will either break or hurt so badly that you can barely hobble across the room? I regret to inform you that you probably have Plantar Fasciitis.

This is a very painful condition of the supportive tissue underneath the foot. It can occur for numbers of reasons, including lack of arch support in shoe wear, injury, or change in exercise training. Several studies done to compare methods of treatment have found that one of the most effective treatments is simply sitting with the foot crossed on the opposite knee, and then grabbing the toes and pulling them back, stretching the toes backwards while also flexing the foot back and stretching the bottom of the foot.

Travel Hints

Flying any distance is a common occurrence for most of us, and if the trip is long enough or late enough, sleep becomes a necessity. Unfortunately sleeping upright is not good for one's neck.

Update on Kina

So, what ever happened with my daughter, Kina, and the Super Bowl contest? SHE WON!!! Thanks to all of you that voted for/supported her. Life since February has been a whirlwind of activity with new performing opportunities and networking with music industry types.

She recorded her first single a couple of days ago, and next week she's meeting with the Interscope bigwigs to discuss what the future holds for her.

And by the way, for those of you who have been asking, she finally arranged an OC show. She's performing at the Kaleidoscope entertainment complex in Mission Viejo on Saturday, July 5th from 7-9 PM and it's free! Now, back to business!





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The solution: Go First Class, of course! However, for the remaining 99.9% of us that travel coach, try to not sleep when flying. If it becomes necessary, try to prop the head back and slightly to the side, supported by a pillow squeezed between your and your neighbor's seat backs. The aim is to have the head more or less upright, and not falling forward or onto your shoulder. The commercially sold, crescent-shaped neck pillows are okay to use, but I suggest using them with the opening towards the back so that your head will be prevented from falling forward/sideways. An alternative is to lean forward onto your crossed arms, resting on the tray table in front of you..... First Class is more fun, though ;)

Also, when removing luggage from the carousel, remember to follow the "no-twisting and bending" rule. To properly remove a suitcase, wait until it is in front of you, grab the handle with both hands with the knees bent while bending over from the hips, not waist, and then pull back and up using the knees and keeping the back straight in the process. Let your legs and body mass do the work, not the muscles of the lower back.

As for carrying luggage, use roller luggage when possible. If not, it is easier on the back to have equal weight in each hand. Carrying a 25 pound bag in one hand is more stressful to your back than carrying two of them, one in each hand. (And you thought that people were being chivalrous offering to carry your bag. They were just trying to get equal stress on their lower back!)

More Bad News about Smoking

A study looked at a group of patients that suffered the same type of injury and tried to predict which of them would end up developing serious low back problems. Of all the groups (including people with excess weight, age, prior low back problems or degenerative disease), the only ones that were likely to develop serious low back problems after trauma were smokers. If you smoke, you are much more likely to develop low back problems after an injury than if you don't smoke, the reason being that nicotine causes constriction of capillaries, the small blood vessels that deliver oxygen and nutrients to the tissues of the body. If these are constricted, the body can't deliver needed materials to the area of injury fast enough to heal the problem. Smokers also take up to FIVE times longer to heal from surgery than non-smokers. My smoking patients, take heed! (*Spine 2006;31:2942-9*)



Thanks for reading, and I hope you find this information useful. Also, please feel free to email me with any suggestions for future topics that might be of general interest.

Yours in health,

Gordon H. Grannis, D.C.

This newsletter is a production of Gordon H. Grannis Chiropractic Clinic, Inc.
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