

SUPPLEMENTARY TABLES

1. Cox proportional hazards univariate analyses of the association between demographic and general health factors and the duration of work absence after carpal tunnel release (non-significant findings)

| | N | Median time to return to work (days) | Inter quartile range | Hazards ratio ¹ | 95% Confidence intervals | P value |
|--|-----|--------------------------------------|----------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------|---------|
| <i>Body mass index (kg/m²) (censored 1 normal, 1 overweight, 2 obese; 13 missing)</i> | | | | | | |
| Normal (18.5-24.9) | 47 | 20 | 12-33 | 1 | - | - |
| Over (25.0-29.9) | 64 | 19 | 12.5-29 | 0.98 | 0.65, 1.46 | 0.91 |
| Obese (≥30) | 67 | 21 | 10-40 | 0.88 | 0.60, 1.28 | 0.50 |
| <i>Surgery to dominant hand ² (censored 3 yes, 2 no; no missing data)</i> | | | | | | |
| Yes | 128 | 19.5 | 12-33 | 1 | - | - |
| No | 62 | 22 | 12-35 | 0.83 | 0.61, 1.14 | 0.25 |
| <i>General health status (censored 5 excellent; 1 missing)</i> | | | | | | |
| Excellent/very good/ good | 165 | 19 | 12-32 | 1 | - | - |
| Fair/poor | 24 | 28.5 | 12.5-42 | 0.74 | 0.47, 1.16 | 0.19 |
| <i>Number of comorbidities ³ (censored 3 none, 1 one; 1 missing)</i> | | | | | | |
| None | 49 | 18 | 7-32 | 1 | - | - |
| One | 67 | 24 | 14-42 | 0.87 | 0.59, 1.27 | 0.47 |
| Two or more | 74 | 19.5 | 10-29 | 1.11 | 0.76, 1.62 | 0.60 |
| <i>Number of disability comorbidities ³ (censored 3 none, 2 one; no missing data)</i> | | | | | | |
| None | 130 | 19 | 9-33 | 1 | - | - |
| One | 39 | 26 | 13-31 | 0.75 | 0.52, 1.08 | 0.12 |
| Two or more | 21 | 20 | 14-31 | 0.81 | 0.50, 1.32 | 0.40 |
| <i>Number of somatising symptoms ⁴ (censored 1 none, 1 one, 3 two or more; 1 missing)</i> | | | | | | |
| None | 96 | 19 | 10.5-35 | 1 | - | - |
| One | 51 | 22 | 13-34 | 0.98 | 0.70, 1.38 | 0.91 |
| Two or more | 42 | 19.5 | 14-31 | 0.84 | 0.58, 1.22 | 0.36 |
| <i>SF36 Mental health score (tertiles) ⁵ (censored 2 poor, 1 intermediate, 2 good; 2 missing)</i> | | | | | | |
| Poor (22.2-57.8) | 60 | 24 | 16-39 | 0.71 | 0.50, 1.03 | 0.07 |
| Intermediate (60.0-75.6) | 68 | 18.5 | 11-36.5 | 0.88 | 0.62, 1.25 | 0.48 |
| Good (77.8-97.8) | 60 | 16.5 | 7-30 | 1 | - | - |

Total sample size n=195. Median duration of work absence relates to the 190 non-censored events.

¹. Adjusted for age and sex.

². Considered and the non-dominant hand for those who reported ambidexterity (n=4) and dominant hand for those undergoing simultaneous bilateral surgery (n=2).

³. Adapted from the self-administered co-morbidity questionnaire [1].

⁴. Adapted from the four-dimensional symptom questionnaire [2].

⁵. Taken from the SF-36 with data-driven tertiles [3].

2. Cox proportional hazards univariate analyses of the association between health beliefs and the duration of work absence after carpal tunnel release (non-significant findings)

| | N | Median time to return to work (days) | Inter quartile range | Hazards ratio ¹ | 95% Confidence intervals | P value |
|--|-----|--------------------------------------|----------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------|---------|
| <i>Believe will be unable to use hand normally in 3 months ² (censored 5 no; 2 missing)</i> | | | | | | |
| No | 168 | 20 | 12-32.5 | 1 | - | - |
| Yes | 20 | 20.5 | 14.5-40 | 1.04 | 0.65, 1.67 | 0.87 |
| <i>Blames self for hand problem ² (censored 5 no; 2 missing)</i> | | | | | | |
| No | 162 | 20 | 12-35 | 1 | - | - |
| Yes | 26 | 22 | 14-31 | 1.08 | 0.70, 1.66 | 0.73 |
| <i>Lack of support from family/friends ² (censored 4 no, 1 yes; 2 missing)</i> | | | | | | |
| No | 156 | 20 | 12-32.5 | 1 | - | - |
| Yes | 32 | 19.5 | 13-40 | 0.88 | 0.60, 1.29 | 0.51 |
| <i>Problem runs in the family/born with a weakness ³ (censored 3 no, 2 agree/strongly agree; 2 missing)</i> | | | | | | |
| No | 134 | 20 | 12-35 | 1 | - | - |
| Agree/strongly agree | 54 | 23 | 12-31 | 0.88 | 0.63, 1.21 | 0.42 |
| <i>Stress made the problem worse ³ (censored 5 no; 2 missing)</i> | | | | | | |
| No | 169 | 20 | 12-33 | 1 | - | - |
| Agree/strongly agree | 19 | 28 | 14-40 | 0.79 | 0.48, 1.28 | 0.33 |
| <i>Lack of exercise contributed to the problem ³ (censored 5 no; 2 missing)</i> | | | | | | |
| No | 172 | 20 | 13-33 | 1 | - | - |
| Agree/strongly agree | 16 | 15 | 10.5-34.5 | 1.23 | 0.73, 2.06 | 0.43 |
| <i>Getting older contributes to the problem ³ (censored 3 no, 2 yes; 3 missing)</i> | | | | | | |
| No | 79 | 26 | 14-42 | 1 | - | - |
| Agree/strongly agree | 108 | 16 | 10-29 | 1.28 | 0.94, 1.74 | 0.11 |
| <i>Work probably didn't cause the problem, but made it worse ³ (censored 2 no, 3 yes; 4 missing)</i> | | | | | | |
| No | 100 | 20.5 | 12-35 | 1 | - | - |
| Agree/strongly agree | 86 | 19.5 | 13-31 | 1.01 | 0.75, 1.35 | 0.95 |
| <i>Pain catastrophisation to at least a moderate degree ⁴ (censored 3 no, 2 yes; missing 2)</i> | | | | | | |
| No | 133 | 19 | 10-33 | 1 | - | - |
| Yes | 55 | 22 | 15-31 | 0.81 | 0.59, 1.12 | 0.21 |

Total sample size n=195. Median duration of work absence relates to the 190 non-censored events.

¹. Adjusted for age and sex.

². Reported on a 0-10 scale and dichotomised to no (0-6) and yes (7-10) [4].

³. Reported on a 5-point scale and dichotomised to agree/strongly agree and neither agree nor disagree/disagree/disagree strongly [5].

⁴. Pain catastrophizing scale dichotomised to those who reported catastrophising pain thoughts and feelings to at least a moderate degree in response to all questions and those who did not [6].

3. Cox proportional hazards univariate analyses of the association between clinical and surgical factors and the duration of work absence after carpal tunnel release (non-significant findings)

| | N | Median time to return to work (days) | Inter quartile range | Hazards ratio ¹ | 95% Confidence intervals | P value |
|---|-----|--------------------------------------|----------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------|---------|
| <i>Katz hand diagram score for side of surgery</i> ² (censored 3 classic/probable, 2 possible/unlikely; 4 missing) | | | | | | |
| Classic/probable | 126 | 22 | 14-38 | 1 | - | - |
| Possible/unlikely | 60 | 16.5 | 9.5-30.5 | 1.10 | 0.81, 1.51 | 0.54 |
| <i>Duration of symptoms</i> (censored 1 ≤ 1 year, 4 > 1 year; 2 missing) | | | | | | |
| ≤ 1 year | 47 | 19 | 10-31 | 1 | - | - |
| > 1 year | 141 | 20 | 13-34 | 0.86 | 0.62, 1.21 | 0.38 |
| <i>Nerve conduction studies performed</i> (censored 3 no, 2 yes; 40 missing) | | | | | | |
| No | 71 | 21 | 14-35 | 1 | - | - |
| Yes | 79 | 20 | 11-33 | 1.14 | 0.83, 1.58 | 0.41 |
| <i>Type of suture material</i> (censored 4 non-absorbable; 49 missing) | | | | | | |
| Non-absorbable | 119 | 21 | 12-38 | 1 | - | - |
| Absorbable | 23 | 20 | 13-29 | 1.15 | 0.73, 1.83 | 0.55 |
| <i>MHQ function score for side of surgery</i> (tertiles) ³ (censored 3 poor, 1 intermediate, 1 good; 2 missing) | | | | | | |
| Poor (0-40) | 79 | 20 | 13-41 | 0.80 | 0.57, 1.12 | 0.19 |
| Intermediate (44-55) | 48 | 19.5 | 13.5-33 | 0.81 | 0.55, 1.19 | 0.29 |
| Good (60-100) | 61 | 20 | 7-29 | 1 | - | - |
| <i>MHQ bilateral activities of daily living score</i> (tertiles) ³ (censored 1 poor, 4 intermediate; 1 missing) | | | | | | |
| Poor (0-61) | 72 | 19 | 12.5-33.5 | 0.96 | 0.66, 1.38 | 0.81 |
| Intermediate (64-82) | 55 | 21 | 13-38 | 0.70 | 0.49, 1.01 | 0.06 |
| Good (83-100) | 62 | 20 | 10-31 | 1 | - | - |
| <i>MHQ activities of daily living score, side of surgery</i> (tertiles) ³ (censored 2 poor, 3 intermediate; 1 missing) | | | | | | |
| Poor (0-55) | 63 | 20 | 12-42 | 0.81 | 0.56, 1.18 | 0.27 |
| Intermediate (58-80) | 63 | 20 | 14-35 | 0.86 | 0.61, 1.23 | 0.42 |
| Good (85-100) | 63 | 20 | 9-32 | 1 | - | - |
| <i>MHQ satisfaction score for side of surgery</i> (tertiles) ³ (censored 3 poor, 2 intermediate; no missing data) | | | | | | |
| Poor (0-25) | 88 | 21.5 | 13-42 | 0.78 | 0.55, 1.11 | 0.16 |
| Intermediate (29-50) | 49 | 18 | 14-29 | 0.87 | 0.59, 1.28 | 0.48 |
| Good (54-100) | 53 | 20 | 9-31 | 1 | - | - |
| <i>Satisfaction with appearance for side of surgery</i> ⁴ (censored 2 satisfied, 3 dissatisfied; 1 missing) | | | | | | |
| Satisfied | 136 | 20 | 10.5-31.5 | 1 | - | - |
| Dissatisfied | 53 | 20 | 13-40 | 0.84 | 0.61, 1.16 | 0.29 |

Total sample size n=195. Median duration of work absence relates to the 190 non-censored events.

¹. Adjusted for age and sex.

². Adapted from Calfee et al. [7].

³. Michigan Hand Questionnaire [8]. Data-driven tertiles.

⁴. Reported on a 5-point scale in response to the statement: I am satisfied with the appearance (look) of my hand. Dichotomised as satisfied (strongly agree/agree) and dissatisfied (neither agree nor disagree, disagree, strongly disagree).

4. Cox proportional hazards univariate analyses of the association between occupational factors and the duration of work absence after carpal tunnel release (non-significant findings)

| | N | Median time to return to work (days) | Inter quartile range | Hazards ratio ¹ | 95% Confidence intervals | P value |
|--|-----|--------------------------------------|----------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------|---------|
| <i>Have more than one paid job (censored 4 no, 1 yes; 1 missing)</i> | | | | | | |
| No | 177 | 20 | 12-32 | 1 | - | - |
| Yes | 12 | 26.5 | 19-42 | 0.61 | 0.34, 1.11 | 0.11 |
| <i>Total paid work hours per week ² (censored 4 ≤37.5, 1 >37.5; no missing data)</i> | | | | | | |
| ≤37.5 | 97 | 22 | 15-38 | 1 | - | - |
| >37.5 | 93 | 16 | 6-29 | 1.25 | 0.88, 1.79 | 0.21 |
| <i>Number of work days per week (censored 1 <5, 4 5; no missing data)</i> | | | | | | |
| <5 | 55 | 23 | 15-35 | 1 | 0.72, 1.39 | 0.98 |
| 5 | 116 | 19 | 10.5-33 | 1 | - | - |
| >5 | 19 | 13 | 6-31 | 1.28 | 0.77, 2.14 | 0.34 |
| <i>Sick leave taken for this problem in the last month (censored 5 no; 16 missing)</i> | | | | | | |
| No | 154 | 20 | 12-33 | 1 | - | - |
| Yes | 20 | 15 | 9.5-30 | 0.99 | 0.61, 1.60 | 0.95 |
| <i>Sick leave taken for another problem in the last month (censored 4 no, 1 yes; 20 missing)</i> | | | | | | |
| No | 152 | 19 | 10.5-31 | 1 | - | - |
| Yes | 18 | 30 | 21-42 | 0.67 | 0.41, 1.09 | 0.10 |
| <i>Received advice about return to work after surgery (censored 5 yes; 3 missing)</i> | | | | | | |
| Yes | 134 | 19 | 12-31 | 1 | - | - |
| No | 53 | 22 | 14-41 | 0.92 | 0.67, 1.27 | 0.61 |
| <i>Required to work to tight deadlines ³ (censored 3 no, 2 yes; missing 3)</i> | | | | | | |
| No | 75 | 23 | 14-40 | 1 | - | - |
| Yes | 112 | 18 | 9.5-31 | 1.19 | 0.89, 1.61 | 0.24 |
| <i>Use power tools that make the hand/arm vibrate ³ (censored 5 no; missing 7)</i> | | | | | | |
| No | 145 | 19 | 12-32 | 1 | - | - |
| Yes | 38 | 22 | 14-42 | 0.68 | 0.44, 1.05 | 0.08 |
| <i>Work with hands above shoulder height for >1 hour ³ (censored 4 no, 1 yes; missing 9)</i> | | | | | | |
| No | 147 | 20 | 12-33 | 1 | - | - |
| Yes | 34 | 19.5 | 13-33 | 0.89 | 0.60, 1.32 | 0.56 |
| <i>Work with neck bent forward for >2 hours ³ (censored 3 no, 2 yes; missing 3)</i> | | | | | | |
| No | 114 | 21 | 13-39 | 1 | - | - |
| Yes | 73 | 18 | 8-31 | 1.19 | 0.88, 1.60 | 0.26 |
| <i>Work with neck twisted for >30 minutes ³ (censored 4 no, 1 yes; missing 7)</i> | | | | | | |
| No | 136 | 20 | 12-34 | 1 | - | - |
| Yes | 47 | 22 | 13-32 | 0.93 | 0.66, 1.32 | 0.70 |
| <i>Drive for >1 hour per day ³ (censored 5 no; missing 5)</i> | | | | | | |
| No | 115 | 21 | 13-38 | 1 | - | - |
| Yes | 70 | 16 | 7-31 | 1.22 | 0.88, 1.68 | 0.24 |

Total sample size n=195. Median duration of work absence relates to the 190 non-censored events.

¹. Adjusted for age and sex.

². Dichotomised by the median for the sample population

³. As part of the normal working day [9].

References

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