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Nerve damage in hernias similar to carpal tunnel, research shows

Independent research charts path to more solutions for hernia sufferers

Cascade Hernia Institute at Meridian Surgery Center provides innovative approaches to reduce the possibility of chronic hernia pain for patients.

PUYALLUP, Wash. — Puyallup hernia surgeon Robert C. Wright’s continues to offer solutions for more hernia patients. And research on the effects of entrapment neuropathy is the healing pathway.

Wright, who heads Cascade Hernia Institute at Meridian Surgery Center, conducted the independent research with Don Born, a neuropathologist with Stanford University School of Medicine. The first phase of the research proved early repair of hernia damage is an effective intervention to avert nerve damage—and reduce the likelihood of long-term pain.

The University of Washington Department of Statistics provided analysis of the research statistics. The peer-reviewed journal *Hernia* published the research in October 2017, and the *American Journal of Surgery* published the research in its May 2017 edition.

“Like nerve enlargement and increased pain in carpal tunnel, we found early hernia surgery could avoid pain from entrapment neuropathy in primary inguinal hernias,” said Wright.

In 63 percent of hernia patients studied, inguinal nerve enlargement was similar to entrapment neuropathy in carpal tunnel syndrome. The hernia in the groin entraps a nerve and injures it, which causes swelling much like the nerve injury seen with carpal tunnel syndrome.

The Neuropathology Department at Stanford University School of Medicine has provided funding for a second phase of the research that will explore evidence of nerve injury in patients with inguinal hernia and correlating that with their pain scores before the hernia is repaired.

As with past independent research, Wright involved local undergraduates in the research: Jordan Landis, a sophomore at Pacific Lutheran University, majoring in chemistry, and Troy Salisbury, a sophomore at Boise State University majoring in biology. The students received approval from the Tacoma General Hospital Institutional Review Board to participate in phase II of this research.

Wright presented the research locally at the Northwest Pacific Surgical Association last November and at the American Hernia Society Meeting in Cancun, Mexico in March. He also highlighted the research findings for a presentation to the European Hernia Society in Vienna last May.

Learn more about Cascade Hernia Institute at www.cascadeherniainstitute.com and Meridian Surgery Center at www.meridiansurgerycenterwa.com or by calling (253) 840-1999.

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