

Ask The Professionals

If you have any questions these professionals can answer, please write to:

"Ask The Professionals"
c/o The Canadian Champion
191 Main Street E.
Milton, Ontario L9T 4N9
or Fax to: 878-4943

HALTON HILLS SPEECH CENTRE



Northview Centre
211 Guelph St., Suite 5
Georgetown
(905) 873-8400
www.haltonspeech.com

Q: My husband has recently suffered a stroke and now has physical/communication/emotional difficulties. Our family and friends are having a difficult time talking to him, can you give us some suggestions?

A: Unlike other illnesses like cancer or Alzheimer's Disease, strokes offer little time to prepare. The sudden onset is traumatic for both the person and the family as you cope with a stroke's often physical and emotional changes. The sudden emotional outbursts or use of profane language that sometimes occurs following a stroke is unsettling for not only the individual themselves but also for those around them. It is difficult to give specific suggestions for your husband as strokes affect everyone differently. However, here are some guidelines that would be helpful.

1. Communicate in quiet spaces with minimal distractions; do not try to talk over the television and/or have more than one person talking at once.
2. Speak slowly and concretely
3. Respect the individual's preference for physical space and touch (it may have changed following the stroke)
4. Avoid frustration
5. Use functional communication (i.e. pictures, writing)
6. Encourage the individual to communicate (hand gestures, body/eye movements) to decrease feeling of loneliness and isolation.

For individuals who have communication difficulties following a stroke, recovery continues to happen long after discharge from the hospital. Therefore, it is important to keep working on communication skills and try to keep discouragement to a minimum.

A Speech-Language Pathologist can provide specific therapy tasks and support as well as help modify the environment to make optimal communication occur. Our Centre, in partnership with the Heart and Stroke Foundation of Ontario (Halton branch) and Georgetown and District Memorial Hospital offers a Living with Stroke program. This is a six week program aimed at providing stroke survivors and their family valuable and practical information and offers them the opportunity to meet and talk to other people undergoing the same challenges. For more information please feel free to call.



Geraldine Hesketh

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Kids Have Rooms Too!

When it comes to our offspring from birth onwards there are so many stages a room can go through.

Nursery can be short term, so be careful not to overdo it. A border can be changed a lot easier than 4 walls of movie characters.

Checks & stripes are long-lived and can be dressed up with bright trim or simplified with the older child. Also it can be made to look feminine or masculine using greens, yellows, blues.

Remember, primary colours are livelier, so if Junior is hyper, muted tones would be better and bright colours as accents can be used.

Clouds on the ceiling are a nice effect and can be put with lots of themes, be it jungle, nautical, floral. York Wallcoverings have great kid's books - trees, castles, birds - can be used on just one wall leaving the rest of the room simply painted.

Teenagers tend to have definite ideas - usually black ceilings & red walls. Why not?

Whatever the choice, make the room more of a studio than a bedroom. If storage space is not a problem, closets can be opened up and turned into interesting spaces. From inserting the bed, chests, built-in TV etc. Use colours like seed-pod, a soft yellow-green. Do the adjacent two walls in grasshopper, an apple hue, and then use souvenir, a lilac, on the fourth wall. White trim and furniture from Ikea and add lots of cushions in these tones. Put different coloured knobs on furniture. Light tone laminate wood flooring from Comfi and finish off with a sisal rug.

Come and see the latest in laminate or click system floors on sale! Or choose one of the latest designs in berber or textured loops.



Tina Doney
Connie Francoz
PHYSIOTHERAPISTS



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(corner of Wilson & Main)
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Q: I've heard that because I use a computer a lot during my work day, that I might get carpal tunnel syndrome. What is this and how do I know if I've got it?

A: Carpal tunnel syndrome is very common today with repetitive work using the hands in offices and manufacturing environments. The term "carpal" refers to the wrist, the carpal tunnel as you might guess is a tunnel created by the wrist, carpal bones (the bones of the hand and wrist) and the carpal ligament (a broad band across the palm surface of the wrist.)

There are structures that run through the carpal tunnel including tendons that attach to muscles in the forearm and bend the fingers, and a nerve, the median nerve. Repetitive use of the hands and wrists can cause these tendons and their muscles to become irritated and inflamed. Over time, if inflammation and swelling continue and the tendons start to thicken the space of the carpal tunnel, gets smaller.

Some people experience pain over the muscles and tendons of the forearm. Other people will experience symptoms from the compression of the median nerve that goes through the tunnel. When the median nerve is compressed, it cannot function properly to provide stimulation to the muscles of the hand, especially some of the muscles of the thumb. Because of this, you may notice weakness in the thumb or when picking up objects. As well, the median nerve supplies sensation to the thumb, 2nd, 3rd, and 1/2 of the 4th finger. When the nerve is compressed changes in sensation, such as loss of sensation, tingling or pain can occur.

Physiotherapists and Occupational Therapists often treat carpal tunnel. Modalities such as ultrasound or acupuncture, along with tissue massage, joint mobilization if needed, stretches and the use of muscle stimulation with carefully graded strength exercises are helpful. Resting or working splints are often provided to provide support and rest to the wrist and help reduce symptoms. It's important to address related factors such as posture and hand position while working, as well as work station set up and to be prevention minded and take breaks from repetitive work to do gentle range of motion exercises at the wrist as well as stretches.

If you think you have symptoms of carpal tunnel, visit your family physician or physiotherapist for more information.

For more information, contact Connie or Tina at the Halton Community Rehabilitation Centre, 905-876-1515.



Dr. Angela Barrow
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BARROW FAMILY CHIROPRACTIC

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HOW CAN I BE SICK AND NOT HAVE ANY SYMPTOMS?

Your definition about health might be incomplete. Just because you don't feel sick or have any symptoms doesn't necessarily mean you are healthy. How many times have you heard of a person who died suddenly of a heart attack? His/her family members are shocked. "He was always so healthy", they say. Was he? If he was healthy with a strong and healthy heart and a good nerve supply, would he have had a heart attack and died? Usually, in such cases, the person is not healthy - just healthy looking.

Most bodily functions go on all the time without you ever being aware of them. You normally aren't conscious of when your organs are working correctly and you may not know it when they aren't - until it's too late. Remember when you first learned, back in grade school, the Earth was spinning around at an incredible speed. If you were like most kids, you went out into the schoolyard and stood still and tried to feel the Earth spinning. How could it possibly be happening if you didn't feel it? Of course the scientific evidence was so overwhelming that there could be no room for doubt that this unbelievable phenomenon was true.

None of us today, as adults, doubt for a second that the Earth is spinning - even if we can't feel it underfoot. Yet, we have trouble believing interference in our nervous system can cause health problems in the rest of the body, or that we can be very unhealthy and not show any symptoms - despite the overwhelming evidence.



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THE HAZARDS OF CHOCOLATE

For those of you that read my articles on a regular basis, this is a repeat article but I feel it is a very important subject.

Most dogs and some cats love the taste of chocolate and if given the opportunity will eat whatever they have access to. At Easter time, we receive many calls from pet owners reporting chocolate ingestion. These pets have not been offered chocolate by their owner, but rather, have opened cupboards, jumped up on counters, or actually opened gift-wrapped boxes of Easter bunnies, eggs and candies.

Chocolate contains a compound that is toxic, if eaten in sufficient quantities. The quantity needed to be poisonous is related to the body weight of the dog or cat. The symptoms vary from gastrointestinal disturbances, abnormalities in heart function, brain disturbances (seizures) and, in very severe cases, death.

If you suspect that your pet has ingested chocolate, I urge you to contact your veterinarian immediately. It is important that you are able to report the amount and description of the ingested chocolate so that your veterinarian can determine the potential severity.

Have a Happy and safe Easter Holiday!!!



Greg J. Lawrence
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Q: What new products are available for the spring?

A: Recently added to our assortment of orthotic and footwear products we now have:

- 3 new custom orthotic sandal styles - each available in three colours
- new custom orthotic clog - available in two colours
- new custom orthotic running shoe - available in two colours
- new custom orthotic steel toe work boot, CSA approved with slip and oil resistant soles.

To have custom-orthotic footwear manufactured, a moulded impression is taken of your feet. From the impression, custom-made orthotics are manufactured and fitted into the desired and prescribed product.

For any of these products, appointments are required. Many extended health insurance plans cover these products.