Carpal Tunnel Decompression – Are Internet Resources Adequate?

Satish Babu, Piyush Mahapatra, Ed Ieong, David Ahearne
North West London Orthopaedics, UK

Objectives

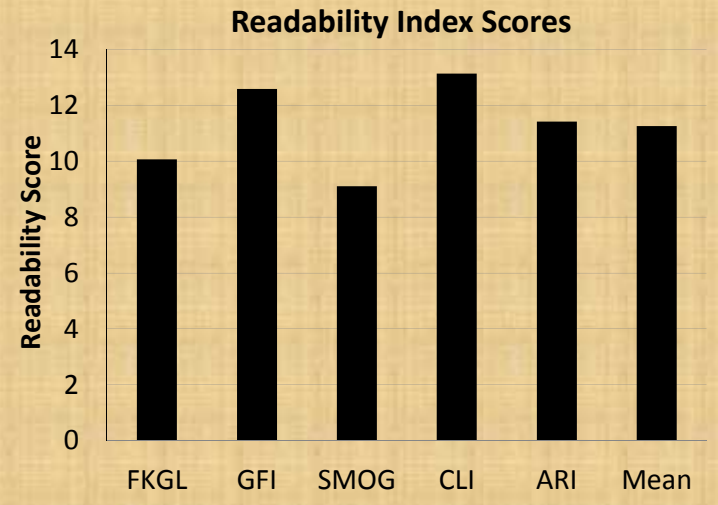
- 80% of internet users utilise it to obtain health information
- Despite the prevalence of medical websites, their quality is poor
- Our aim was to assess the quality & readability of medical websites addressing Carpal Tunnel decompression

Methods

- "Carpal Tunnel Decompression" keywords were searched on 3 most popular search engines
- Top 50 websites from each search engines were evaluated
- LIDA medical website validation tool (Minervation) used to assess:
  - Reliability
  - Usability
  - Accessibility
- Readability tools used included:
  - Flesch Reading Ease Score (FRES)
  - Flesch Kincaid Grade Level (FKGL)
  - Gunning-Fod Index (GFI)
  - Simple Measure of Gobbledybook (SMOG) Index
  - Coleman – Liau Index (CLI)
  - Automated Readability Index (ARI)

Results

- 84 unique, relevant and accessible websites identified
- Mean FRES score 56.78
  (60 – 70 is universally recommended target)
- Mean combined reading index 11.2
  (Indicating 11 years of schooling required to read)
- Indices are equivalent to the Wall Street Journal!



LIDA Validation Tool Results	
Accessibility	82.7%
Usability	60.0%
Reliability	42.4%

Conclusions

- Information on medical websites is poorly reliable
- Websites are difficult to read for majority
- Onus must be on clinician to better advise patients