**Sickness absence after carpal tunnel release: a systematic review of the literature**

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**Authors’ contributions**

LN, KWB, JA and DW conceived the study and prepared the draft manuscript. LN and MS performed the literature screening and data extraction. LN and KWB performed the risk of bias assessments and data syntheses. All authors reviewed and contributed to the final manuscript.

**Conflicts of interest**

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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**SUMMARY**

Time to return to work after carpal tunnel release varied widely in the literature and was inconsistently measured. Few studies reported specific occupational information, such as return to work times for different duties or work schedules. It is currently not possible to provide evidence-based guidance for patients about when they might expect to return safely to their work.

**Running head**: Return to work after carpal tunnel release

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