Iredell Health System is excited to partner with Iredell Statesville Schools to help each of you with your personal health and wellness goals. We want you to feel “Healthy and Ready to Educate.”

Carpal Tunnel Syndrome:

**It’s all in the wrist**

Do you spend your days using a computer, sorting mail, or assembling small parts? If your workplace duties put stress on your wrists, you may be at risk for carpal tunnel syndrome (CTS).

CTS occurs when the median nerve, which travels through the wrist from the forearm to the hand, becomes squeezed. The median nerve is protected at the wrist by the carpal tunnel, a narrow passageway of ligament and bone. If tendons, which also pass through the carpal tunnel, become thickened or swell, the passageway narrows, pressing on the nerve.

Although many cases of CTS appear to be tied to repetitive movements at work or leisure, researchers haven’t found a firm link. Repetitive motion can cause other disorders, such as bursitis or tendonitis, but it doesn’t appear to cause CTS unless a person has other risk factors, according to the National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke.

The most common cause of CTS appears to be heredity; some people simply have smaller tunnels and are more prone to the problem. Risk factors that may contribute to CTS include having a smaller carpal tunnel than normal; suffering a wrist sprain or fracture that causes swelling; an overactive pituitary gland; thyroid disorders; rheumatoid arthritis; diabetes; repeated use of vibrating tools; stress at work; fluid in the joints caused by pregnancy; and a cyst or tumor in the carpal tunnel. CTS occurs more frequently in women than in men.

**Symptoms and signs**

Symptoms of CTS come on gradually and can be in one or both hands. They frequently first appear in the morning, when a person needs to “shake out” a hand because of sleeping with flexed wrists. Other symptoms include pain in the wrist and forearm; weakness and loss of mobility in the hand; numbness in the fingers, except the little and ring fingers; tingling in the fingers when the wrist is tapped; and decreased grip strength.

Keep your hands safe. Learn how to prevent CTS.

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Keeping Men Healthy

Significant numbers of male-related health problems such as prostate cancer, testicular cancer, infertility, and colon cancer could be detected and treated if more men were aware of these problems and what can be done to prevent them, or find them early when they are easier to treat.

Many men are reluctant to visit their health center or physician for regular screening examinations of male-related problems for a variety of reasons including fear, lack of information, and cost. Men who are educated about the value that preventive health care can play in prolonging their lifespan and their role as a productive family member will be more likely to participate in health screenings.

Click here for a chart that provides general healthcare guidelines for men.
A Thanksgiving Menu Tune-Up

Holidays bring joy … and food anxiety. How to cook, how to serve, and, finally, how much? In an era when we all seem to be on a diet, do you give in and make everything Grandma did?

Today’s goal is not to re-create a Norman Rockwell painting, but to produce a festive meal you will be happy to serve on Thanksgiving Day. The biggest change: If you don’t need to present the whole turkey for carving at the table, cook a turkey breast instead.

Cooking times

If you start with a fresh turkey breast, you don’t have to worry about thawing it in time to cook for dinner. It will probably come with directions and a pop-up timer, but here are the basics: A five- to six-pound turkey breast roasted at 325 °F will cook in about two hours. Basting with butter or oil isn’t necessary. You’ll remove the skin before slicing and serving, because that’s where most of the fat is.

The breast will yield about three pounds of solid white meat. A three-ounce serving—a bout the size of a deck of cards—contains 115 calories, 26 grams protein, less than a gram of fat, 71 mg cholesterol, no carbohydrate or fiber, and 44 mg sodium.

Here’s the skinny on other holiday favorites:

Gravy. A turkey breast won’t yield a lot of juice, so add some nonfat chicken broth. To thicken, start with a tablespoon of flour or cornstarch dissolved in a half cup of cold water. Stir it with a whisk. Add chopped mushrooms for a giblet texture.

Vegetables. Instead of adding things to your vegetables, let them be themselves. Steam the beans and use fresh-cut veggies as an appetizer tray, maybe with a little low-fat dip. Plain sweet potatoes—hold the marshmallows, please—add color to your plate.

Dessert. Skip the big pies and do a tray of mini-tarts or petit fours from a bakery or the freezer.

Keep your sanity and your good health

The great plate debate. Consider using eight-inch plates and leaving Grandma’s 10-inch china in the cupboard. Smaller plates will help people choose smaller portions without having to think about it.

Fuss less. Cleanup is easier with disposable foil roasting pans. Aluminum foil makes a perfect cover to keep your turkey breast from over-browning and your outside-the-bird stuffing from drying out.

Qualify your menu. Shoot for quality, not quantity. You don’t need more food than your family and guests will eat or more leftovers than you can enjoy. As you plan the menu, ask what they’d miss if it wasn’t on the table.

Keep the turkey moist. The bird’s internal temperature is the true indicator of readiness: 165 degrees Fahrenheit or 74 degrees Celsius for the breast, and 165 to 170 degrees Fahrenheit or 74 to 77 degrees Celsius for the thigh. And when it’s done, it’s done.

Call for help. You can call the USDA Meat and Poultry Hotline toll-free at 888-674-6854 from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. weekdays except federal holidays and Thanksgiving Day, when it’s open from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. They will answer e-mail questions sent to mphotline.fsis@usda.gov

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