

Avoiding Avocado Hand – Interview Transcripts

Ramsey Ellis, M.D., fellowship-trained hand surgeon, OSF HealthCare

“One of the things that happens with people is that when they go to cut their avocados for guacamole, they hold the avocado in their hand with one hand and then they use a paring knife, which is sharp, in the other hand. And as that paring knife hits the pit of the avocado, they slip and then the tip of the knife plunges into the hand and can cause damage to nerves and to tendons.” (:23)

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“The same thing happens with lemons and limes where folks are cutting them with the fruit in the palm of their hand and then the knife slips. So a really important summer cooking safety tip is to always place the lime, the avocado on the cutting board, stabilize around the fruit or vegetable with your hand and then use the knife on top so that your hand is not underneath where your knife is operating.” (:27)

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“It can be a simple laceration of the hand for which you should, if it’s a deep enough laceration, go to the urgent care or to the emergency department so that the wound can be irrigated and repaired. And that’s simple, simple recovery all the way to injuring a tendon. The tendons are what helps you bend your fingers and so once you cut one of those, you may have a finger that doesn’t bend or stays outstretched. And sometimes people also injure nerves, so you may end up with a numb spot on one of your fingers after that knife cuts the skin.” (:33)

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“Two tips for avocado lovers this summer. One: always cut with your knife below your holding hand, so stabilize the fruit and cut down. And the other thing is consider buying a special implement to cut and pit avocados. There are a variety of special tools on the market that are between three and five dollars that allow you to safely cut and then stab the pit of an avocado and remove it, and that can prevent a lot of injury.” (:28)