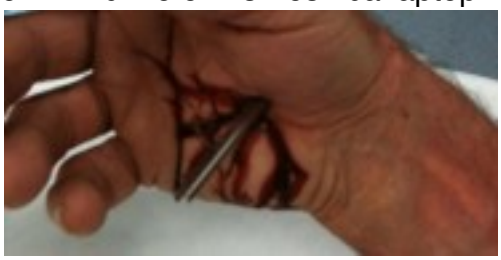
A British man in New Zealand is recovering after suffering a freak injury caused by his laptop computer. According to the New Zealand Herald newspaper, 52 year old William Warner suffered a horrendous hand injury after the DVD drive of his Toshiba laptop fired out a piece of metal which impaled his palm.



According to the newspaper report, Warner works as a driver in the Whangaparaoa area near Auckland. The Briton said that he had placed a disc on the DVD tray of his laptop, and was in the process of closing the drawer when a sharp piece of metal shot out and pierced his right palm. **Metal Spike** "I looked at my palm and I was wondering, God what just happened?" he is quoted as saying. "Then the pain … became excruciating and I had to be rushed to hospital." Warner was apparently taken to North Shore Hospital, where the 11cm metal spike was removed. His treatment included having a bone fused as well as stitches. It seems that the metal spoke was part of the track holder of the DVD tray. The accident reportedly happened a year ago, and Warner has been seeking compensation from Toshiba for the injury, after discovering from his doctors that the after effects may be permanent.

Warner states that he is struggling to complete simple chores.

"I've been told I can no longer fish or play golf, and even writing for me now is a struggle," Warner reportedly said.

"I can't believe that trying to play a DVD on the laptop would land me with injuries that ended the use of my right hand as I know it," he said.

Replacement Laptop

Warner had first complained to the store where he purchased the laptop. He was asked to email the details so the problem could be raised with Toshiba.

Toshiba's first response was apparently to offer Warner a replacement laptop, but he has since been negotiating for financial compensation.

The New Zealand Herald quoted Toshiba's marketing communications manager, Mariana Thomas as saying that the company was aware of the case but would not make any further comment as it was in discussions with Mr Warner.

"Toshiba does not believe that the circumstances of the case raise any general safety issue with its products and stands behind their safety," Thomas reportedly said. "We are not aware of any incident with a Toshiba product resulting in a person suffering injuries of a similar nature in New Zealand or elsewhere in the world."

Hard To Verify

Of course incidents like this can be very hard to independently verify. Most injuries associated with laptops tend to be physical burns.

In June for example HP recalled 162,000 lithium-ion laptop batteries after a number of people reported incidents of injuries and burns affecting batteries that hadn't been included in an earlier recall.

Prior to that, HP announced a recall programme in May 2010affecting about 54,000 batteries, which itself followed on from a May 2009 recall affecting about 70,000 batteries, according to the US Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC).

Acer, Toshiba and Sony have also previously issued recalls for overheating machines.

In September 2010, 59-year-old Eileen Visser, a former school inspector sued her former employer Ofsted in the High Court for breaching safety regulations. Visser blamed her company's laptop for causing a fire at her thatched cottage that resulted in more than £350,000 damages.