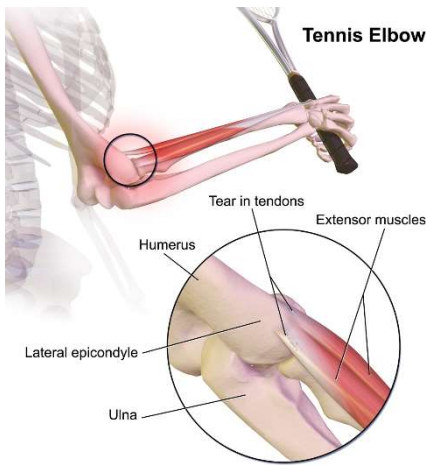


Tennis Elbow (Lateral Epicondylitis)

Self-care Guide

Introduction

Tennis elbow, or lateral epicondylitis, is a painful condition of the elbow caused by overuse. Tennis elbow is an inflammation of the tendons that join the forearm muscles on the outside of the elbow. The forearm muscles and tendons become damaged from overuse — repeating the same motions again and again. This leads to pain and tenderness on the outside of the elbow.



Cause



Tennis elbow is a classic repetitive stress injury caused by overuse. It is often due to damage to the extensor carpi

radialis brevis (ECRB) muscle. This occurs during a tennis groundstroke, for example. When the ECRB is weakened from overuse, microscopic tears form in the tendon where it attaches to the lateral epicondyle. This leads to inflammation and pain.

Symptoms

Tennis elbow begins as an ache on the outside of your elbow. It gets worse over time until it is a severe burning pain. You may notice pain moving from the outside of your elbow to your forearm and the back of your hand when you grip, twist, or lift. You may find weakness in the elbow, forearm, and/or wrist. You may also feel difficulty with some motor skills such as shaking hands, holding a glass or mug, turning doorknobs, etc.

Home care

Acute inflammatory stage:

1. *Rest and ice therapy:* when there is redness or hotness; pain at rest or during night time, you should take rest and reduce the elbow/wrist movements. You may also apply ice on the wrist for 15 minutes, up to three times per day until symptoms improved.

2. *Uses of elbow brace:* suggest a wrist or forearm brace to reduce stress on the injured tissue.



Chronic stage:

After the acute inflammation subsided, following the home care as instructed by therapist can promote the recovery:

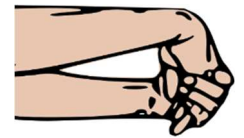
1. To reduce the pain and promote circulation through hot pad or soak your elbow in warm water bath ($<45^{\circ}\text{C}$) for 15 minutes

2. Stretching exercise

- Pull the fingers upward with the good hand until there is stretching feeling in the forearm, keep for 10 sec and repeat for 10 times



- Pull the fingers downward with the good hand until there is stretching feeling in the forearm, keep for 10 sec and repeat for 10 times



3. Muscle strengthening exercise

- Sit in a chair holding a water bottle in your hand with your palm facing down, resting your elbow comfortably on your knee.



- Keeping your palm facing down, extend your wrist by curling it towards your body. If this is too challenging, do the movement with no weight.