

# ELBOW REHABILITATION PROGRAMME

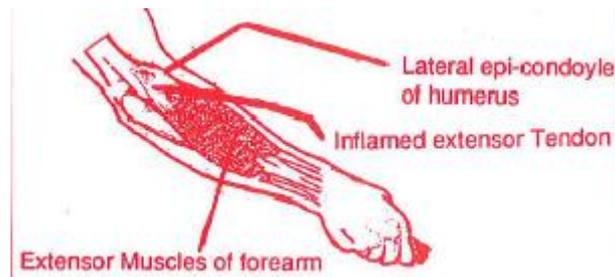




**Elbow injury is the fourth most common injury among the sporting fraternity. It is a condition which particularly plagues racket players and golfers. There are two major causes of elbow injury:-**

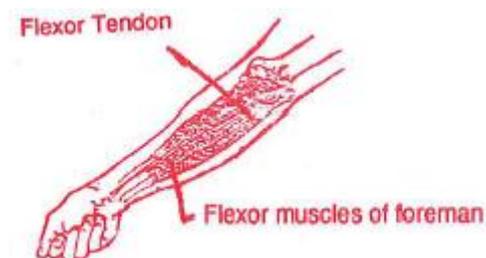
## *1. Lateral Epicodylitis*

This is frequently referred to as a **Tennis Elbow** and results in pain and/or inflammation on the lateral or outer aspect of the elbow. The injury itself involves inflammation of the extensor tendon where it is inserted at the lateral epi-condyle of the humerus or arm bone. This injury is usually caused by overuse of repetitive stressing on this tendon.



## *2. Medial Epicodylitis*

This is frequently referred to as **Golfers Elbow** and is a very similar injury to a tennis elbow except it occurs at the flexor tendon insertion at the forearm (the inside of the elbow). This tendon is attached to the muscles which flex the wrist and fingers of the forearm.



## Contributing Factors

- **Poor Playing Technique**, particularly a “wristy” or jerky action when playing golf or tennis.
- **Improper equipment**, grip size in both golf club and tennis racket, string tension in tennis rackets and inappropriate swing weight in golf club.
- **Overuse**, excessive unsupervised activity.
- **Weak Muscles**, or muscle imbalance

## Treatment

In the majority of elbow tendonitis cases rest is essential in treatment. In the short term rest and ice may assist in dampening the symptoms. However, in many cases a chronic elbow injury will require medication. This may include anti-inflammatories which prevent the reoccurrence of inflammation and sometimes this anti-inflammatory will be administered as a steroid injection at the extensor or flexor insertion.

Braces are frequently recommended during the recuperation phase after an injection. This is usually placed 1-2cms below the elbow joint and should be worn during all activities (shopping, gardening, lifting of briefcases or playing sport) until such time as the inflammation has subsided.

## Muscle Rehabilitation

The main stay of returning a subject back to activity is to ensure that weak muscles are corrected. Weak muscles are a major contributor to the problems of both tennis and golfers elbow. In many cases reoccurrences of these injuries are a chronic injury and are caused by weakened forearm muscles. Therefore it is essential to rehabilitate these muscles prior to returning to exercise.

The following sets of exercises are grouped into two, Phase 1 and Phase 2 Rehabilitation.

## Phase 1. Rehabilitation

### Elbow Stretch

Hold your racket arm at shoulder level in front of you with your elbow straight. Clench your fist and flex the wrist to normal position and alternatively turn your arm inwards with a flexed wrist and outward with an extended wrist.



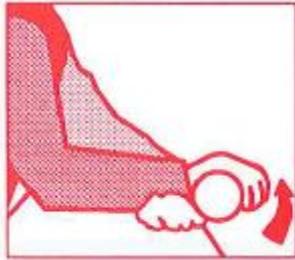
### Wrist Curls

Sit with your injured arm on your fist as shown. Grasp a tin of beans (approx. 1lb in weight) and gradually raise your wrist as much as you can. Repeat palm up and then palm down.



# Squeezing

To strengthen the required area, squeeze a tennis ball and as your strength improves you can use a squash ball.



# Twisting

With your arms out in front of you, wring out a dry tea towel with both hands.



## Phase 2. Rehabilitation

### Flexor Stretch

With a straight elbow and arm facing up grasp your thumb and middle of your hand. Pull wrist down as far as you can and hold for 10 counts.



## Extensor Stretch



With straight elbow and palm facing down, grasp the back of your hand and pull your wrist down as far as you can and hold for 10 counts.

## Pronation

Support your forearm on a table with your wrist in neutral position. Using a tin of beans, roll wrist into pronation as far as you can. Hold for 2 counts and raise back to starting position.



## Supination

Support your forearm on a table with your wrist in a neutral position. Using a tin of beans, roll wrist into full supination. Hold for 2 counts and raise back to starting position.



## Wrist Curls

Support your forearm on a table with your hand over the edge, palm **upwards**. Using a tin of beans, lower your hand as far as you can and then curl it up as far as you can. Hold for 2 counts.



## Wrist Reverse

Support your forearm on a table with your hand over the edge, palm **downwards**. Using a tin of beans, lower your hand as far as you can and then curl it up as far as you can. Hold for 2 counts.



## Neutral Wrist Curls

Support your forearm on a table with your hand over the edge and your wrist in neutral position. Using a tin of beans, lower your wrist as far as you can. Hold for 2 counts.

