

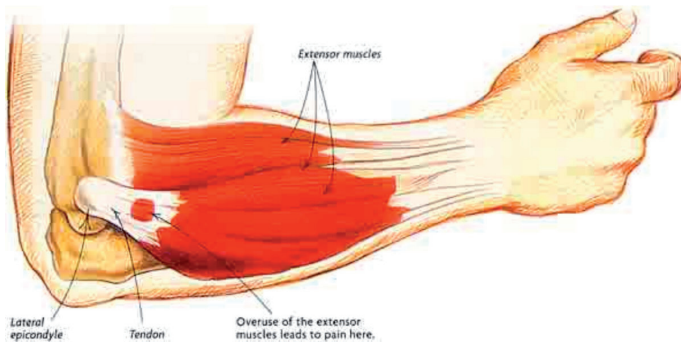
Lateral Epicondylitis (Tennis elbow)

Exercise Booklet



What is Lateral Epicondylalgia?

Lateral Epicondylalgia or 'Tennis elbow' involves injury to the forearm extensor tendon as it inserts on to the lateral epicondyle on the outside of the elbow. This tendon attaches the forearm muscles to the elbow and helps to extend the wrist.



Why does it occur?

Presently it is not known why Tennis elbow occurs. It appears to be more common in individuals who repetitively use their hand and wrist in gripping activities associated with occupation and/or sport and is thought to be an overuse injury.

What is the treatment?

Although the mechanism of injury is unknown, research has shown that a specific type of eccentric training can be effective for the majority of individuals. You will engage in this programme as part of your rehabilitation, initially under close supervision from your physiotherapist. Due to the slower healing capacity of tendons you must comply with the programme for many months, although you may experience some improvement within a few weeks.

What is meant by 'eccentric' training?

Eccentric training involves a muscle action where the muscle and tendon complex are repeatedly lengthening. When you start this type of exercise you may experience some soreness in your forearm muscles. This is normal and usually settles within the first week.

Tennis Elbow Rehabilitation

Eccentric Programme

Your exercise programme should be performed x 2 daily. They include both eccentric and stretching exercises.

The eccentric exercise can be broken down into two phases as illustrated below. It should be performed with control and at a speed directed by your physiotherapist. It should be performed for 3 sets of 15 repetitions. 30 seconds rest should be taken between sets. It is important to experience some discomfort during these exercises.



Phase 1.

With sore arm supported on a table, lift your wrist up with the unaffected hand.



Phase 2.

Take the unaffected hand away and slowly lower. Repeat this process for each repetition.

Progressions

The eccentric exercise can be progressed with the addition of hand weights as shown in the picture. The technique remains the same. This progression is at the discretion of your physiotherapist but generally should only commence when your current exercise programme is no longer painful.



Addition of Hand Weight

The second exercise is also an eccentric exercise and you start by holding a weight in your hand, a hammer can be used if you have no access to hand weights at home.



Phase 1.

Keep elbow at 90 degrees and locked in at your side. Hold the weight with your forearm in a neutral position (palm neither facing floor or ceiling)



Phase 2.

Turn your forearm so that your palm faces the ceiling. Return to the starting position. Repeat this process for every repetition.

Stretching Exercise

Each stretch should be preformed three times and held for 30 seconds. Stretches should be preformed after the eccentric exercises.



1. Wrist extensors

Standing or sitting. Keep elbow straight and bend wrist forwards using your opposite hand. Hold when you feel the stretch in your forearm.