

Lateral and Medial Epicondylitis (Tennis and Golfer's Elbow)

BACKGROUND

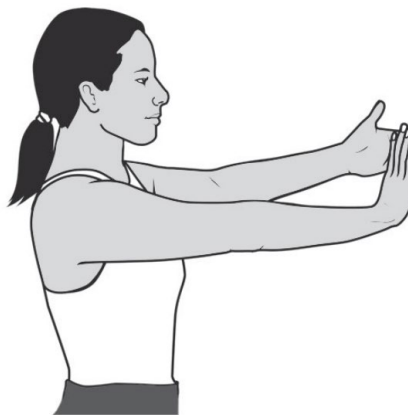
Tennis elbow (lateral epicondylitis) and golfer's elbow (medial epicondylitis) are painful conditions affecting the tendons on the outside (tennis elbow) or inside (golfer's elbow) of the elbow. These conditions are most often caused by overuse which can lead to degenerative changes to the tendon, known as tendinosis. This leads to pain and tenderness around the elbow and occasionally weakness with gripping. Up to 90% of patients are successfully treated with nonsurgical treatment. Most commonly, nonsurgical treatment options include activity modifications, bracing, a home exercise program (shown below), physical therapy, non-steroidal anti-inflammatory medication, and occasionally corticosteroid or platelet rich plasma injections. In patients who fail 6-12 months of nonoperative management, a surgical procedure to remove the degenerative portion of the tendon and repair the healthy tendon can successfully improve symptoms.

HOME EXERCISE PROGRAM

Stretching (perform 3-4 times per day)

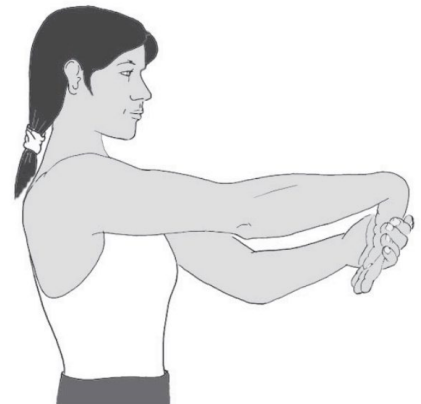
1. *Wrist Extension*

- Straighten your arm and bend your wrist backward.
- Use your opposite hand to apply gentle pressure across the palm and pull your hand toward you until you feel a stretch on the inside of your forearm.
- Hold the stretch for 15 seconds. Repeat 5 times.



2. *Wrist Flexion*

- Straighten your arm with your palm facing down and bend your wrist so that your fingers point down.
- Use your opposite hand to gently pull your hand down until you feel a stretch on the outside of your forearm.
- Hold the stretch for 15 seconds. Repeat 5 times.



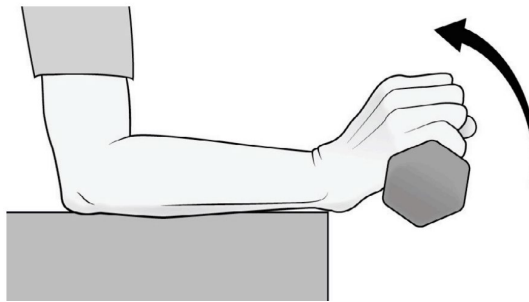
Strengthening (perform 1 time per day)

Equipment: dumbbell hand weights (1lb., 2lb., 3lb.). May also use household goods (soup can, water bottles, etc.) as weights. Rubber stress ball or tennis ball. Rubber band.

General instructions: begin each exercise with no weight. Once you can complete 30 repetitions on 2 consecutive days with no increase in pain, you may increase your weight (begin with 1lb., advance to 2lbs., end with 3 lbs.)

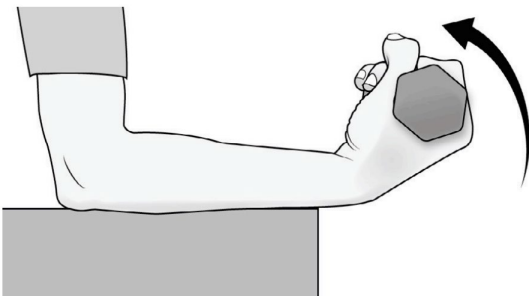
1. *Wrist Extension*

- With the palm down, bend your wrist up as far as possible.
- Hold up for 1 second, then slowly lower for 3 seconds.
- Complete 30 repetitions.



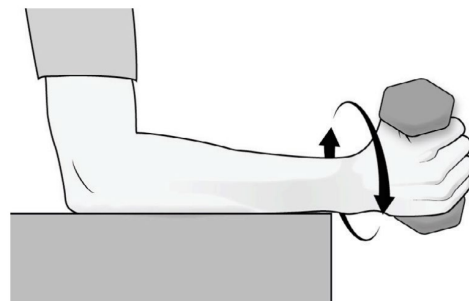
2. *Wrist Flexion*

- With the palm up, bend your wrist up as far as possible
- Hold up for 1 second, then slowly lower for 3 seconds.
- Complete 30 repetitions.



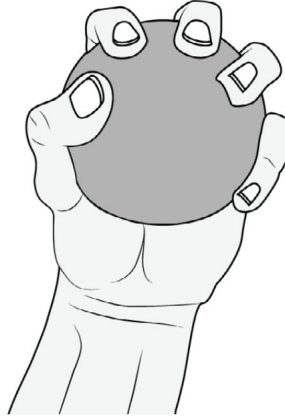
3. *Forearm Supination and Pronation*

- Begin with the palm facing the side. Slowly turn the palm facing up.
- Slowly return to the start position, then slowly turn the palm down.
- Slowly return to the start position. This completes one repetition.
- Complete 30 repetitions.



4. *Stress Ball Squeeze*

- Holding a rubber stress ball or tennis ball in the palm of your hand, squeeze the ball for 30 repetitions.
- If this produces pain in the elbow, a softer ball should be used.



5. *Finger Extensions/Stretch*

- Place a rubber band around 4 fingers.
- Spread fingers 30 times.
- If resistance is not enough, a second rubber band or a thicker rubber band can be used.

