

Tennis Elbow Treatment Advice

Tennis Elbow... What causes it and how do I treat it?

Dave Middleton of Breedon Priory Health Club

Cause.....

You don't have to be a tennis player to be affected by tennis elbow. It is an overuse injury causing pain around the outside of the elbow. Tennis elbow, also known as lateral epicondylitis, is believed to affect around one in three people at any time, most often between the ages of 40 and 60. It is the most common injury to the elbow joint. It can occur in the home, workplace or gym performing any action in which the elbow is constantly bending while the hand is gripping, e.g. painting the ceiling with a roller, kayaking, badminton, using a screwdriver or even fly-fishing! The main cause is simply doing too much in a concentrated spell. Another cause can be bad technique. You normally get pain and tenderness to the touch which occurs on the outside of the elbow and may extend down the forearm. This is normally due to the forearm muscles not being strong enough.

What should I do?

In order to treat Tennis Elbow, rest is crucial in order to allow the injury time to heal and to prevent any further activity which could cause damage or discomfort to the injury. Even writing with a thin pencil or pen can cause a flare up, so use thicker pencils.

Try to grip only with 3rd, 4th and 5th fingers, relaxing the index finger and thumb. Applying ice to the injury is an important aspect of healing as it will reduce any swelling and inflammation as well as providing cooling pain relief to the injury. Using the RICE method (rest, ice, compression and elevation) is beneficial.

It is possible to carry on with a normal fitness routine, but avoid gripping and bending exercises until the pain has gone. When you are pain free, strengthen your forearms with supported wrist curls: with your elbow supported, raise and lower the wrist while holding a 1kg weight.

Forearm strapping or Kinesiology Taping can help with pain and support if done by a professional.

Feel free to ask me for advice or treatment if you are suffering from this issue

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