

### Strengthening Continued:

If you have **Medial epicondylitis** then perform the wrist drops with your arm supported on a table and palm facing up. Let your hand “fall” towards the ground allowing your wrist to bend quickly or “drop”. Once the wrist is down, use your other hand to bring it back up to neutral or flat and start the cycle again. Perform 3 sets of 15 repetitions once per day.

With the “wrist drop” protocol, the exercises need to be done daily, with 3 sets of 15 repetitions. Weight may be added when this can be done in a pain free manner. If done consistently, your pain will normally subside within 6 weeks.

For general improved forearm strength, You may be given the following exercises:

- **Wrist Curls:** Rest your forearm on a table with your hand over the edge of the table. Holding a small weight (1lb. or a can of soup) or a piece of theraband, turn your palm down. Lift your hand up extending at your wrist for a count of 2, hold for a count of 2 and then return to the start position. Do 3 sets of 10. Perform the same exercise as above except with your palm facing up instead of down, and also with your thumb facing up.
- Squeeze rubber balls of various sizes while moving the hand and forearm.
- Hold a small weight or a hammer in your hand, rest your forearm on a table with your palm hanging over the table and then slowly turn your palm up and down.

For treatment of your  
elbow injury,

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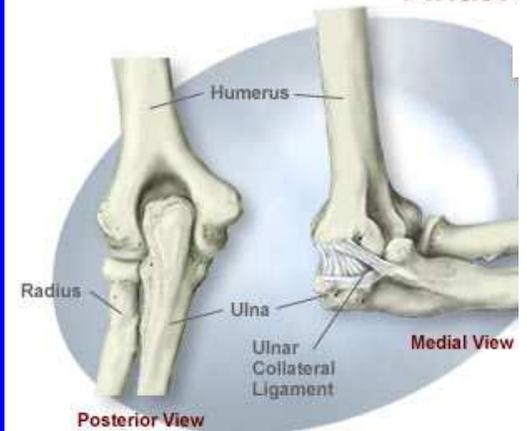


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**Our Expert services are committed and caring. We continue to excel in serving generations of the Burnaby Community.**

## Elbow Tendinopathy (Tennis Elbow Golfer's Elbow)



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# Elbow Tendinopathy

Tendinopathy is a common injury in the elbow region. Pain develops around the elbow usually over the bony prominence on either side of the elbow. The pain usually develops gradually, but can occur after a sudden increase in use of the muscle or tendon (ie: carpentry, pruning, knitting, gripping, tennis) or with an increase in normal activity levels. It is most common in people over age 35 due to the age-related changes in the tendon that make it less flexible and less able to transfer applied loads.

Predisposing factors include weak muscles or muscle imbalance, overuse, improper sports or work equipment and improper technique.

With lateral epicondylitis (tennis elbow), the pain is felt over the bone that is prominent on the top of the elbow if your palm is facing down. It is usually very tender to touch this spot. With medial epicondylitis (golfer's elbow), the pain is felt over the bony prominence on the inside of the elbow when you hold your palm up. With either of these, the pain may radiate down the forearm and possibly into the hand.

The pain may be a dull ache or a sharp twinge and is often made worse with gripping activities.

## Treatment

- **Physiotherapy:** Your Physiotherapist may use different modalities such as ultrasound, interferential current, and/or laser to help with pain management and tissue healing.

The physiotherapist may also do deep transverse friction massage on the tendon. This may be quite painful initially, but the pain should diminish after the first 30-60 seconds. Your Physiotherapist can teach you how to do this technique for yourself at home. This technique should be done until you feel the area going numb (approximately 2-3 minutes). It is best done prior to and following activities where you are using your arm.

- **Modify your activity:** Use pain as your guide and avoid activities that aggravate your pain. In general, activities involving gripping, pinching, and fine finger movements must be restricted. This may mean taking time off work or the sport or activity that is aggravating the symptoms. These activities may be resumed gradually, when your therapist tells you it is safe to do so.
- **Ice:** Apply ice to the site several times a day for 10 – 15 minutes each time. Always ice the area after any activity that has aggravated your pain.
- **Prevention:** Wider grips for tools, pens, rackets, etc. and an ergonomic work station may be helpful. Maintain the stretching and strengthening program that your Physiotherapist shows you in order to prevent a recurrence of the problem.
- **Bracing:** There are several different braces or supports designed for this problem. The brace is used to relieve the pressure on the tendon. Initially, the brace may be worn at all times except at night. Gradually, as the pain decreases and the strength increases, you will need to use it only for the activities that aggravate the pain. Your therapist will instruct you on the best brace for you as well as how and when to wear it.

- **Physiotherapy Exercises:**

1. **Stretching:**

Stretching the area will help prevent stiffness and help mobilize scar tissue that may develop in the tendon. The area should be warmed up first with 5 minutes of pain-free movements or heat. Stretching should be performed slowly and gently so that you feel a stretch, but not pain. If you have lateral epicondylitis/tennis elbow, straighten your elbow, palm down, bend your wrist down using your opposite hand and then pull your hand towards your baby finger. If you have medial epicondylitis, straighten your elbow, palm up and then extend your wrist with your opposite hand so that your fingers point towards the floor. Hold each stretch for 30 seconds and then relax. Repeat 5x. Repeat this At least 3 times per day, especially prior to doing the activity that aggravates the symptoms.

2. **Strengthening:**

Recent research has shown that “wrist drops” or eccentric loading is the most beneficial method of resolving tendinopathy. Initially the wrist drops will need to be performed with little or no load, and progressed to using light weights as you improve. If you have **lateral epicondylitis**, straighten your elbow, palm facing down, with your arm supported and wrist off the edge of the supporting surface. Let your hand “fall” towards the ground allowing your wrist to bend quickly or “drop”. Once the wrist is down, use your other hand to bring it back up to neutral or flat and start the cycle again. Perform 3 sets of 15 repetitions, once per day.