

Immediate treatment of inflammation using PRICE;

The treatment should be used directly after the injury has been sustained and carried out for 3-5 days.

Tissue injury involves damage to small blood vessels, which in turn results in bleeding at the site of injury. There are 5 main signs of inflammation that can be recognized; Heat, redness, swelling, pain and loss of function. Inflammation is a necessary bodily response for the healing process of the damaged area. However we can use PRICE as the body tends to over react to injury, to minimize the symptoms and reduce discomfort.

- **P - PROTECT** - protecting the injured tissue from further damage, whilst allowing swelling to accumulate.
- **R - REST** - reducing the energy requirements of the area as well as avoiding any excess blood traveling to the area.
- **I - ICE** - which causes vasoconstriction, allowing the blood vessels to reduce blood flow to the area. Crushed ice in a damp towel works best, and should be put on immediately after injury for 20 minutes, then every 3-4 hours at 5 - 10 minutes duration.
- **C - COMPRESSION** - Simple bandages will do, whilst making sure the bandages are not too tight.
- **E - ELEVATION** - The injured area should be placed higher than the heart level, in turn helping to reduce blood pressure, limit bleeding as well as encouraging removal of fluid through the lymphatic system.



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Tennis Elbow Injury

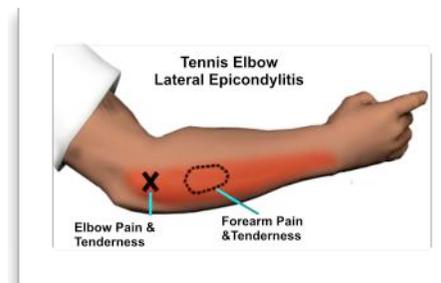
About your injury;

Tennis elbow (lateral epicondylitis) is an inflammation of the outer elbow where the tendon attaches to the bone. It is caused by repetitive movements and gripping actions, such as the method used in gripping a tennis racket. Lateral epicondylitis affects 40-50% of recreational tennis players most of these however are over the age of 30. Unfortunately rest is usually not a suitable treatment.



Warm up and warm downs;

When carrying an injury it is especially important to make sure there is sufficient blood flow to the area in question as well as warming the muscles. This must be carried out before any stretches, and is usually done so by having a light jog for up to 5 minutes. Upon finishing an activity a warm down must also be carried out, which allows for the removal of lactic acid as well as a gradual decrease to heart rate and blood pressure. This should be carried out with a light jog decreasing to walking pace.



Factors contributing to tennis elbow;

- 30+
- Frequency of playing
- Force and flexibility of forearm extensors, i.e. tightness of grip
- Unskilled players are more prone
- Size, weight and string tension of racket
- Older balls
- Poor technique
- Single handed backhand

Prevention

There are modifications you can make to your equipment to help reduce re-occurrence. If the injury is not tennis related the same principles can be applied.

- Try a lighter racket
- Increase the grip size
- Use vibration dampeners
- Reduce the string tension
- Ensure a larger racket head size
- Use new balls
- Allow wet balls to dry
- New, soft grip material.

Steps to take when you believe you have tennis elbow

1. Do not return to the activity until you have received medical advice.
2. Ice the elbow using a frozen object wrapped in a towel and apply for 5 minutes. Repeat every 15 minutes if possible
3. Take a full dose of anti-inflammatory medication if possible. Take for one week.
4. Attend the sports injury clinic for further early treatment. Where you will be asked to carry out stretches. They may also recommend the use of a wrist splint to rest the inflamed tendon.
5. Physiotherapy/osteopathy/chiropractic can all help.
6. If there is no improvement injections can often help, often they will produce a longer lasting treatment.
7. Local surgery can be performed, which has a 95% success rate, where grip strength is almost certainly maintained.

Stretching and Strengthening Exercises

Specific stretching and strengthening exercises can help if carried out at the right stage of rehabilitation. It is vital that you seek medical advice before attempting any stretches, as well as repeating the exercises on both arms.

1. Wrist flexion stretch

Hold the affected wrist behind your back, bending the wrist upwards until you feel a stretch in the forearm, hold each stretch for 5-10 seconds and repeat 10 times twice a day.

2. Grip strengthening

Squeeze a squash ball (or something similar) in the palm of your hand. The exercise must be done with the back of the hand aligned with the forearm. hold the squeeze for three seconds and then release. This should be performed 20 times per day.

These tips should be considered for a reduction in pain.

P - perception of tennis as an upper body sport.

E - Elbow leading at the ball strike

T - Trunk rotation too early

E - Excessive use of tennis as a conditioning tool.

S - Sustaining grip throughout.

A - Allowing ball contact behind the body line.

M - Moving into position too late.

P - Poorly co-ordinated sequential movement.

R - Racket head dropping below the elbow.

A - Abnormal flexibility in the forearm.

S - Single to double handed backhand change.

