

TENNIS ELBOW

Symptoms, causes and treatment

By Sanne Mortensen
UK Chartered Physiotherapist
Centro Mar y Salud

It is no wonder that, with the complex movements taking place and the angles, muscles and ligaments working on the joint, we occasionally have problems. The most common elbow problem is Tennis Elbow followed by Golfer's Elbow. Anyone can get either of these two conditions, even without ever having touched a golf club or tennis racket. They are both caused by a tendonitis (inflammation of the tendons), not of the tendons that move the elbow, but of the tendons that provide movement all the way down in the wrist.

Tennis elbow occurs from doing too much DIY, such as painting. This is because the movements involved in this activities involves holding onto something firmly in the hand while repetitively moving the hand up and down or twisting the forearm. An over-exertion injury, just the same reason as to why tennis players get this problem.

Golfer's Elbow is an inflammation of the tendon attachments on the inside of the elbow, when you look at the elbow with the arm straight and palm facing forwards. Pain is again very severe and at times sharp and burning. It can again hurt to pick up things or to grip things firmly while bending the hand, such as throwing or even curving the hand over a computer mouse or keyboard.

DIAGNOSIS: There are several tests that a therapist or doctor can perform in order to reach a diagnosis. Occasionally X-rays, ultrasound and MRI scans are used where the clinical findings do not fully fit the patient's history or symptoms. These tests will check for arthritis, fractures and dislocations.

TREATMENT: There are a number of immediate self-help treatments appropriate for

you to try that can settle the problem down.

R.I.C.E. (Rest from the activities that cause the pain to allow the tendon to heal itself, Ice on the affected area (5 minutes of a cold pack wrapped in a tea towel several times a day), Compression from a bandage and Elevation of the elbow.

An elbow clasp. This is a form of specialised bandage that offloads the injured area.

You should see your doctor or physiotherapist if the problem is severe, or not settling down with the above treatments, Treatment options can include.

NSAIDs (Anti-inflammatory drugs such as Ibuprofen or Naproxen). There is a tendency towards using anti-inflammatory gels or creams rather than tablets, as the blood supply to the tendons are poor and the medicine that would arrive to the

area would be limited with tablets. The doctor will help decide what is best for you. Pain killers are also often necessary.

Ultrasound therapy. Helpful for aiding soft tissue repair and giving pain relief.

Soft tissue massage. Ensures the healing fibres heal in "straight" lines rather than "knotted" up.

Soft tissue mobilisation and manipulations.

Teaching and performing stretches and strengthening exercises regularly.

Interferential/TENS pain therapy.

Taping of the injured structures to redistribute the load along the forearm allowing the tendons to heal.

Patients not responding to the above measures should be referred to see an orthopaedic consultant.

mar
y salud



Dr Bernadette Veeger - General Practitioner

Colegio Oficial de Médicos de Málaga Colegiado No. 29/09036

General Medicine, Well Woman/Man Checks, also home visits.

health well-being body mind



General Medicine ~ Counselling ~ Physiotherapy ~ Paediatric physiotherapy ~ Osteopathy ~ Obstetrics
Massage ~ Acupuncture ~ Gynaecology ~ DITI (Digital Infrared Thermal Imaging - Breast Screening)
Iridology ~ Vitamine and Mineral deficiencies testing ~ Food intolerances testing
Colon therapy ~ Pedicure ~ Photo depilation ~ Yoga classes ~ Gym classes

CENTRO MAR Y SALUD

Tlf: 952 532 065 • 617 913 196 • www.centromarysalud.com • info@centromarysalud.com

Paseo Marítimo, El Morche/Torrox Costa (N-340, Km 281) Very good access with parking in front of the centre