

### Tennis Elbow

Tennis elbow or lateral epicondylitis is the most common cause of pain on the outside of the elbow. It is an overuse injury to the extensor tendons of the wrist where they converge to insert onto the bony prominence on the outside of the elbow. It is not purely an inflammation of these tendons; there is a degenerative component whereby overuse of these muscles has caused micro tears to develop within the tendons.

You don't have to be a tennis player to suffer tennis elbow. It is caused by repetitive overuse of the wrist and forearm muscles in tasks such as typing or gripping.



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### Signs and Symptoms:

- Tenderness over the lateral aspect of the elbow which can radiate into the forearm.
- Pain worse with gripping activities such as opening a jar or carrying handbag.
- Elbow stiffness: usually worse of a morning
- In severe cases there can be associated pins and needles or numbness in the forearm and hand.

### Diagnosis:

A thorough examination by your physiotherapist is usually sufficient to diagnose tennis elbow.

Shoulder further investigation be required appropriate referral can be organised.

### Treatment:

In most acute cases tennis elbow can be successfully treated or managed with conservative methods. Physiotherapy treatments would include:

- **Soft tissue massage:** to the forearm muscles which are tight and overworked.
- **Dry Needling:** to release tight bands of muscles in the forearm. Also useful for encouraging blood flow and healing.
- **Ice:** to assist with controlling inflammation (Particularly for acute cases)
- **Electrophysical therapy:**
- **Advice** regarding bracing, rest, lifestyle modifications and anti inflammatory medications.
- **Exercise Prescription:** The appropriate strengthening and stretching exercises will be prescribed throughout your recovery.

In severe and chronic cases tennis elbow can be stubborn and take up to 6 months to resolve. Early intervention is vital to a quick recovery.

If any of this sounds familiar contact **EastSports Physiotherapy** on **(02) 9328 3822** to make an appointment. Ross Messiter and Emma Esslemont specialise in the treatment of sports and musculoskeletal injuries.

### Interesting fact:

*The name suggests a strong correlation with racquet sports, however approximately 90% of people with tennis elbow don't play tennis.*