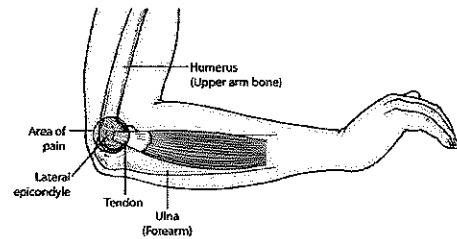




## **TENNIS ELBOW**

Tennis elbow results from overusing the muscles in your forearm that straighten and raise your hand and wrist.

The tendons are repeatedly tugged causing tiny tears at the point of attachment on the lateral epicondyle (the bony bump at the outer side of the elbow), resulting in pain and tenderness.



The symptoms of tennis elbow are:

- pain or tenderness on the outer side of the elbow pain when you straighten or raise your wrist and hand
- pain made worse by lifting a heavy object
- pain when you make a fist, grip an object, shake hands, or turn door handles

Among the activities that can cause tennis elbow are tennis and other racket sports, carpentry, machine work, typing, and knitting.

How is it treated?

- Rest from the activity causing the pain
- In the acute phase apply Ice pack for 20 mins 4 times a day for the first few days
- Apply tubigrip on elbow to help reduce swelling and pain
- Take Non Steroidal anti-inflammatories as advised by your doctor
- To prevent reoccurrence and help in the recovery do the rehabilitation exercises

## **Rehabilitation Exercises for Tennis Elbow**

You may do the stretching exercises right away, but only start the strengthening exercises when stretching is nearly painless.

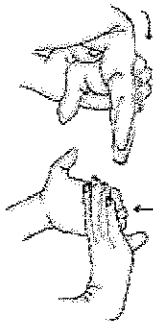
**STRETCH** - to reduce tension along the forearm/elbow muscles.



### Elbow range of motion

Gently bring your palm up toward your shoulder and bend your elbow as far as you can. Then straighten your elbow as far as you can 10 times.  
Do twice a day.

For the backhand / forehand stretches hold each exercise for 20 seconds at a gentle stretch. 10 repetitions per exercise twice a day



### Backhand Stretch

Straighten your elbow.

Grab the back of your hand with your other hand and pull down until you feel a gentle stretch on the back of your forearm and hold for 20 seconds.

### Forehand Stretch

Straighten your elbow. Grasp your fingers with your other hand.

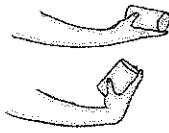
Slowly pull your hand up and back until you feel a gentle stretch along the palm-side of your wrist and forearm and hold for 20 seconds.



**STRENGTHEN** - Elbow muscles and tendons to prevent re-injury.

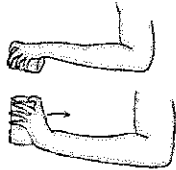
Any of these exercises must not cause elbow pain in the first two sets. If they do cause pain, wait one week and try again.

Try and do 10 repetitions per exercise twice a day, 3 days per week (alternate days).



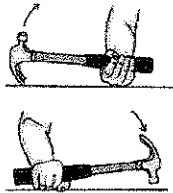
**Wrist flexion exercise**

Hold a can or weight (250g) in your hand with your palm facing up. Bend your wrist upward.  
Slowly lower the weight and return to the starting position.  
Gradually increase the weight of the can or weight you are holding.



**Wrist extension exercise**

Hold a can or weight (250g) in your hand with your palm facing down.  
Slowly bend your wrist upward.  
Slowly lower the weight down into the starting position.  
Gradually increase the weight of the object you are holding.



**Forearm rotation strengthening**

Hold a can or hammer handle in your hand and bend your elbow 90°.  
Slowly rotate your hand with your palm upward and then palm down.  
Do 2 sets of 10.

**When can I return to my normal activities?**

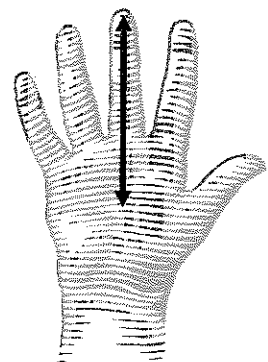
Everyone recovers from an injury at a different rate. In general, the longer you have symptoms before you start treatment, the longer it will take to get better.

You may return to your sport or activity when you are able to forcefully grip things, like a tennis racket or golf club, or do activities such as working at a keyboard without pain in your elbow.

It is important that there is no swelling around your injured elbow and that it has regained its normal strength compared to your uninjured elbow. You must have full range of motion of your elbow.

Use proper form during your activities, whether they are sports or job-related. For instance, be sure your tennis stroke is correct and that your tennis racket has the proper grip size.

- The correct grip size can be measured by the length from the tip of the middle finger to the middle of the palm with the hand open – this should be the same measurement as the circumference of the grip (See Fig Right)
- Warm up before playing tennis or doing other activities that involve your elbow or arm muscles. Gently stretch your elbow and arm muscles before and after exercise – see stretches above.
- Ice your elbow after exercise or work.



If you are unable to progress to the strengthening exercises despite 4 weeks of rest then you may need to see your GP to consider a steroid injection to help speed up the healing process.