

Personal exercise program

Musculo-skeletal and Pelvic health physiotherapy services
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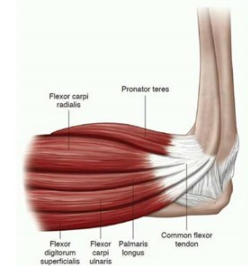
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Golfers Elbow

What is Golfers Elbow ?

Golfers elbow can cause pain on the inner aspect of the elbow and sometimes down the forearm. It affects the common flexor tendon which inserts into a bone on the inner aspect of the elbow and then attaches to muscles that flex (bend) the fingers and wrist and pronate (turn) the forearm. It tends to be caused by overloading the tendon which can then cause some changes within the tendon which create pain. It doesn't just effect golfers and is no longer thought to be an inflammatory condition .

Treatment

Most cases can be managed with initial rest, changing activity, medication and exercises.

It is not unusual for recovery to be slow over months rather than weeks but the majority of cases will improve.

Top Tips for tendon pain

1. Try an ice pack on the region for maximum 10 minutes (wrap it in a damp towel to avoid an ice burn). This can be done regularly for the duration of the pain.

(Do not use ice if you have poor sensation over the area, an infected wound, Raynauds Syndrome, or Cryoglobulinaemia)

2. Take regular pain relief recommended from your GP/pharmacist/physio.

3. Limiting or modifying the most painful activities and regular gentle activity can help to ease the pain. Avoid excessive repetitive use of the region.

Elbow band



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Some people find a Golfers/Tennis elbow band helpful in reducing symptoms during the day (see picture).

These can be purchased online or some pharmacists will stock these.

You should place these approx. 1 inch below the elbow skin crease and if it has a padded/thicker section this should be placed on the inside aspect (little finger side) ie the gentle compression should be targeted on the inner aspect for a Golfers elbow.

They should only be worn short periods whilst doing the activities you find difficult.



Wrist Splint

Alternatively some people find wearing a velco wrist splint helps relieve symptoms and can be worn for short periods only whilst doing the activities you find difficult.

These can also be purchased online or some pharmacists will stock these.

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NOTE : You should not use both the wrist splint and the band at the same time and if you develop any tingling or increased pain wearing either of these then you should loosen or remove it immediately.

Exercises

The following exercises have been recommended to help treat this condition. They might cause slight discomfort but they should not cause severe pain during or after.

Try to do the warm up exercises before starting each session.

Start with stage 1 exercises for the first 2 weeks aiming to do these every day and then progress to stage 2 exercises for the following 2-4 weeks doing these every other day. Progress on to Stage 3 when you feel able to, again every other day. You may need to continue these for up to 3 months.

Please note the hold times and repetitions suggested and follow as best you can, you may need to do less to start with and build up gradually depending on your pain levels. You can start with a smaller weight and build up.



WARM UP

Stand.

Bend your elbow and then straighten your elbow.

Repeat 5 times.

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WARM UP

Stand with your elbow bent and palm turned down.

Turn your palm up and down rotating your forearm.

Repeat 5 times



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WARM UP

Bend and straighten your wrist.

Repeat 5 times.



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STAGE 1

Isometric Wrist Flexion

Start with your hand over the edge of a table with your palm facing up and forearm supported (you may wish to place folded towel under arm for comfort).

Hold a small weight that you can grip easily , ideally a small dumbbell if available or you could use a water bottle or shopping bag with objects in for example (you may wish to start with a small amount of weight and build up as comfortable) .

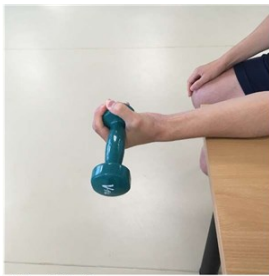
Keep the wrist straight in the position shown.

No movement should occur.

Hold this position upto 30-40 seconds then rest.

Repeat 5 times or as able .

Alternatively instead of using a weight you could resist this movement by using your other hand to push down on the palm .



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STAGE 1

Isometric Forearm Pronation

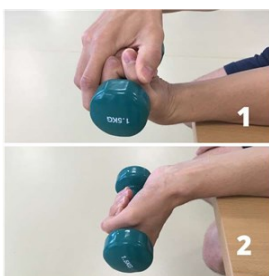
Start with your hand over the edge of a table with your palm facing up and forearm supported.

Grip one end of a weighted object so that more weight is on the outside (thumb side) eg a dumbbell or water bottle or hammer etc with wrist in the position shown (you may wish to start with a small weight and build up as comfortable) .

No movement should occur.

Hold this upto 30-40 seconds then rest.

Repeat 5 times or as able .



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STAGE 2

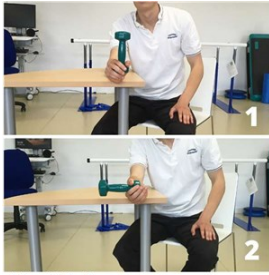
Eccentric Wrist Flexion

Start with your hand over the edge of a table with your palm facing up and forearm supported.

Grip a heavy object in the affected side eg dumbbell, water bottle or shopping bag with objects in, and as in the position shown (you may wish to start with a small weight and build up as comfortable) .

Slowly lift the weight upwards **using the unaffected side hand to assist this movement** as shown. Then with the **affected hand only**, slowly lower the weight back down as far as tolerated.

Repeat upto 10-15 times building upto 3 sets of 10-15 with a minutes rest between sets when able.



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STAGE 2

Eccentric Wrist pronation

Start with your affected side hand over the edge of a table with your thumb facing up (as in picture 1) and forearm supported.

Grip the bottom end of a weighted object in the affected side eg small dumbbell or water bottle or hammer etc (you may wish to start with a small weight and build up as comfortable) .

Slowly lower the weight outwards so the palm faces up. Then using the good side assist the weight back to the start position.

Repeat 10-15 times building upto 3 sets of 10-15 with a minutes rest between sets as able.



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STAGE 3

Wrist Flexion through range

Rest your wrist over a table with your palm facing up. You could put some padding under the arm eg folded towel for comfort.

Hold onto a heavy object you can grip easily , ideally a dumbbell if available ,water bottle or shopping bag with objects in for example . (you may wish to start with a small weight and build up as comfortable)

Curl your wrist upwards to point your fingers up towards the ceiling. Slowly lower down back as far as comfortable.

Repeat 10-15 times building upto 3 sets of 10-15 with a minutes rest between sets as able.



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STAGE 3

Forearm pronation through range

Start with your affected side hand over the edge of a table with your palm facing up and forearm supported **or** standing with elbow by your side at 90 degrees (as in picture)

Grip a heavy object in the affected side eg small dumbbell or water bottle or hammer etc (you may wish to start with a small weight and build up as comfortable) .

Slowly lower the weight inwards so the palm turns down. Then slowly return the weight to palm up position.

Repeat slowly 10-15 times building upto 3 sets of 10-15 with a minutes rest between sets as able .

FLARE UP MANAGEMENT

It is not unusual to have a few flare ups along the way during your recovery. If this happens don't panic as it's very unlikely you will have done any lasting damage. Go back to the initial "top tips" advice at the start of the leaflet. You may need to scale back the exercises a bit and then gradually build up again eg if you were on stage 2 or 3 you may need to go back to stage one for a while. It may be that you overdid an activity so learn from what might have flared it up and try to find a way to avoid or modify that particular activity until things settle more.

You can contact the physio again if you are struggling to manage symptoms despite following the advice.
