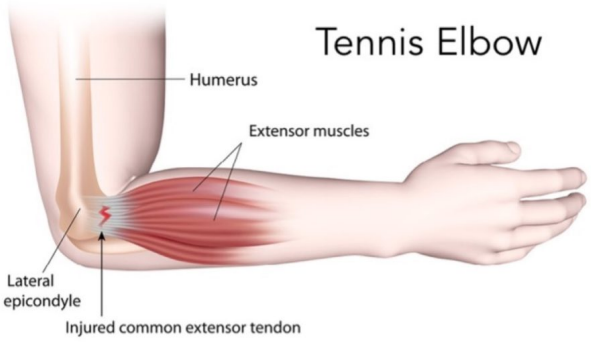
Tennis Elbow

Tennis Elbow or lateral epicondylitis is a common injury seen in the clinic. While classically described as a breakdown or weakness of the common extensor tendon of the elbow due to repetitive loading of the forearm, we have come to understand that the injury is often overload to a range of potential pain producing structures on the outside of the elbow, not just the tendon.



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The condition may develop with a sudden increase in load to the elbow due to change to sporting loads or types, taking up a new DIY project or sudden increases in the manual handling demands of looking after kids. It can also occur without obvious change in load to the elbow, in sports or occupations requiring quite repetitive loading to the elbow such as tradies, desk workers and with tennis.

Symptoms experienced generally include sharp pain on the outside of the elbow with griping, lifting and twisting actives or prolonged use of the arm. Weakness of the arm and decreased grip strength will often develop due to the pain.

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Diagnosis is made easily in the clinic based on your history, presenting symptoms and a battery of orthopaedic tests, designed to test mechanics and to load provocative tissue. Imaging is almost never required unless significant tissue damage is suspected.

Treatment of tennis elbow will vary depending on the exact structures and mechanisms involved. As irritation and or weakness of the tendon is a common feature, a degree of offloading and activity modification is usually required. Often tightness of the muscles of the forearm can affect the mechanics of the joint, compression of the tendon on the underlying bone or even restriction of the radial nerve. In these cases, stretch and release exercises will be helpful.

A program of exercises to gradually load and strengthen the tendon, muscles of the elbow and upper arm is almost always undertaken to increase load capacity of the elbow. Acupuncture, ice, anti-inflammatory medication and bracing can all be helpful adjuncts to treatment.



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Stop putting up with elbow pain, book an appointment today with one of our highly experienced physios for an accurate diagnosis and a plan to get you pain free and back doing all you enjoy!

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