



Sara Gordon & Associates

Physiotherapy Newsletter

Tennis Elbow

Tennis elbow or *lateral epicondylitis* is an extremely common injury that originally got its name because it is a frequent tennis injury, appearing in a large proportion of tennis players. However it is often seen in people who do not play tennis at all.

What is Tennis Elbow?

- Pain about 1-2 cm down from bony area at the outside of the elbow (lateral epicondyle)
- Weakness and pain doing simple tasks such as opening a door handle or shaking hands with someone.
- Pain on the outside of the elbow when the hand is bent back (extended) at the wrist against resistance.
- Pain when pressing the forearm muscles just below the elbow.

How have I got it?

Tennis elbow is often caused by overuse or repetitive strain caused by repeated extension (bending back) of the wrist against resistance or gripping. This may be from activities such as racquet sports but is also common after periods of excessive wrist use in day-to-day life, especially DIY or gardening. For example:

What can I do to help?

- Apply ice to the elbow (15 mins up to six times a day). This will help reduce pain and inflammation if present.
- Rest - an extremely important component in the healing of this injury.
- Wear a brace or support to protect the tendon whilst healing and strengthening, particularly when returning to playing / equivalent.

What can Physiotherapy do to help?

- Fully assess the problem to ascertain all of the causes
- The use of ultrasound, acupuncture, myofascial release techniques, kinesiology taping can all aid recovery
- The provision of a rehabilitation programme to resolve this episode and prevent reoccurrence.