

DAMINI PHYSIOTHERAPY PATIENT INFORMATION ARTICLE

Welcome to the second edition of the Damini Physiotherapy Patient Information Article. Each month we will highlight an area of interest for discussion. Included at the end of the article will be contact information for your feedback, questions and input in relation to the articles. We look forward to hearing from you!

Elbow Pain

Many of us have experienced elbow pain at some time in our lives. This pain may have been short lived or developed into a chronic problem that took months to get rid of. You may have heard of the term "tennis elbow" or "golfers elbow" and you may ask; what is this, how does it happen and how do I get rid of it?

What is this?

Even if you don't golf or play tennis, both these injuries are generic terms used to describe any pain that happens in the area of the elbow. Tennis elbow describes pain on the outside of the elbow. The cause of this pain can be from different causes including muscle and tendon dysfunction, ligament sprains, joint problems, bursitis or nerve problems. Golfers elbow describes pain on the inside of the elbow. The cause of this could also be from any of the before mentioned injuries.

How does it happen?

Elbow pain usually happens due to repetitive strain over a period of time or a single incident. Activities or jobs that require constant gripping, pulling or twisting of the wrists and elbows can cause repeated microtrauma to structures around the elbow. When the body cannot put up with these stresses any longer it responds with inflammation and subsequently pain. Quite often this pain starts slowly, but if ignored it can become quite debilitating and can often disrupt sleep and daily activities. Elbow pain can also be caused by a single incident such as a forceful muscle contraction or something that stretches a muscle or ligament too far. This would likely cause some instant pain that would slowly increase over a few days.

How do I get rid of it?

Whether your pain is from repetitive strain or a single injury you must avoid continued aggravation. Now we realize that most people cannot completely avoid using their arm, but depending on the exact injury there are certain motions and activities that should be avoided. Gentle stretching is also important for all elbow injuries. Correct posture and ergonomics (workstation set up) also can play a big part in helping you to recover and avoid further injury of the elbow.

If you suffer from these injuries or strains, physiotherapy can help. Your physiotherapist would assess your elbow to determine the cause of the pain, treat the affected area, teach you home exercises and discuss with you certain activities to avoid. Treatments can include posture correction, soft tissue mobilization, ultrasound, laser therapy, electrotherapy, and acupuncture.

For feedback, questions and input in relation to the articles please contact Damini Physiotherapy.