



## **Lateral epicondylitis**

### **AKA ... tennis elbow pain**

Lateral epicondylitis is becoming a relatively common condition among even those who do not play tennis. Lots of people develop tendonitis at the elbow due to things you do on a regular basis, such as using a computer mouse, performing data input, writing, and any other activity performed by your arm involving a high level of repetition. Tennis players can develop elbow pain as well, usually due to technique issues, racquet string tension, improper grip size, or simply over-training.

Treatment for this chronic, sometimes frustrating condition may involve rest from the offending activities, anti-inflammatory medication, ice application, brace/strapping, and physical therapy. Physical therapy focuses on improving the overall conditioning of your arm with exercises designed to increase flexibility and perhaps strength of specific muscle groups. Treatment may also address posture and work station modification, and if appropriate, referral to your tennis professional for advice regarding your tennis racquet grip and string tension, and even your playing style.

### **Do's:**

- Rest from the activities that seem to cause the pain.
- Use ice, commercial cold packs, or frozen peas to treat the inflammation (10-15 minutes of application - every hour for severe cases, 3 times per day for even mild cases).
- Stretch as directed before, during, and after performing any repetitive arm activities.
- Experiment with chair height, mouse location, and keyboard position if using a computer aggravates your condition.
- For tennis players, find a tennis professional (or instructor) for advice regarding your technique and racquet.

### **Dont's**

- Avoid repetitive activities using the symptomatic arm.
- Avoid long durations of computer work or other repetitive arm activities - take frequent rest and stretch breaks.
- Don't sit in a slouched fashion to do desk work.
- Don't play through the pain and expect it to get better.