Tennis Elbow
(Lateral Epicondylitis)
or
Golfers Elbow
(Medial Epicondylitis)

A STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE
TO CURING
YOUR ELBOW PAIN

by
Jonathon (JR) Rosploch DPT, CSCS

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Congratulations on being one step closer to your recovery!

In the video we have identified that you have either Tennis Elbow (Lateral Epicondylitis) or Golfers Elbow (Medial Epicondylitis). It is important that I take a moment and further explain these two diagnoses.

First of all, you do not need to play golf or tennis to get these injuries. These are just two sports where the injuries are common.

Tendons are found at the end of all your muscles and they are what connect to the bone. Tendons normally glide painlessly in your body whenever a muscle contracts. Tendonitis is caused by inflammation of a tendon that receives repetitive strain. Due to the inflammation, those same tendons now cause you pain. Epicondylitis is a specific form of tendonitis in your elbow. Are you still with me?

These overuse or overload injuries actually occur from motions at your wrist, even though you feel the pain in your elbow. Tennis elbow is caused by tendonitis of the muscles that bend your wrist back or extend the wrist. Golfers elbow is caused from bending the wrist down or flexing the wrist. These motions occur constantly throughout our daily lives and it is important that you take time to figure out how you are overusing these muscles. Do you type a lot on a keyboard, do you have a job that involves a repetitive task, or do you lift heavy objects like furniture all day long? Epicondylitis can also be caused by driving for long periods of time, un-screwing jars or playing golf and tennis.

Let’s move on now to getting rid of your pain.
TREATMENT

In the video I mentioned 4 main things you need to start doing right away:

1. ICE/HEAT  2. STRETCH
3. AVOID PAINFUL MOTIONS  4. CONSIDER BRACES

Ice and Heat

Ice and heat both can be beneficial. Use ice immediately following the injury. Heat is best applied at least 2 weeks after initial injury. After 2 weeks use either ice, heat or both depending on what feels better with your pain. Ice is best used at the end of activity such as work or tennis. Try using an ice pack for 20 minutes over the affected area or a try an ice cup massage over the tendons for 3-5 minutes. I personally suggest the ice massage to my patients.

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Moist heat is applied to the elbow for 20 minutes, make sure not to place the heat directly on your skin, use a towel in-between. Heat increases blood flow to the tendons, bringing in important healing factors and also warming the tissue for stretching.

To make ice cups fill a paper cup with water and place in the freezer until frozen. Then remove the cup, peel off the top part of the paper exposing the ice. Next, you will rub circles over the painful area for 3-5 minutes. Bonus tip: this works well for any tendon injury.
Did Someone Say Stretching?

All stretching should be done pain free, but you should be able to feel the stretch.

Hold all the stretches for 20 seconds and repeat 5 times. The stretches should be done 4 times a day.

**Medial Epicondylitis:** to stretch for golfers elbow straighten your arm with your palm up. Then, with your opposite hand pull your hand down. To increase the stretch, slightly turn your wrist in.

**Lateral Epicondylitis:** to stretch for tennis elbow straighten your arm with your palm down. Then, with your opposite hand pull your hand down. To increase this stretch slightly turn your hand out. Again, all stretching should be done pain free but you should be able to feel the stretch.
Avoid Painful Motions or Activities

This may seem obvious, but it is the most important and hardest treatment of the four. Why is this so important? You now know that tendonitis is caused by overuse and over-load of the tendons. Our bodies are designed to inform us when something is wrong. It does this by pain signals. Every time you have pain in your elbow, you have caused micro trauma or irritated your injury. The injury will not heal if you continue to irritate your elbow. Do your elbow a favor and stop injuring it!!

Another thing that can help reduce motion at the wrist is bracing....

Bracing

I talked about how it is actually the wrist motions that cause tendonitis in the elbow. The specific motions are bending the wrist back for tennis elbow or bending the wrist down for golfers elbow. One effective way to decrease these motions is with an over-the-counter wrist brace that can be found at your local pharmacy or sporting goods store. The wrist brace allows minimal movement at the wrist giving those tendons a rest.
Another brace that can help provide relief is called a counter-force brace. These work by off-loading both medial and lateral tendons when they are working. To use the brace effectively it needs to be worn whenever you are using your arm and should be placed slightly below the painful area. It is important that you do not place the brace on the pain. By being just outside the painful location you will allow the brace to work and offload the tendons.

Try this for 2-3 weeks. If you are seeing improvement, great! Keep it up you are doing awesome.

If after 3 weeks your pain is not any better or at anytime your pain gets significantly worse you should contact your physical therapist or doctor. You are going to need further medical attention. As a medical provider, we love to know what our patients have tried. Do your doctor or physical therapist a favor and bring this protocol with you to your visit so they can look over what you have been working on.

Now lets work on the most important thing; keeping this pain away.

YOU NEED TO BE PAIN FREE BEFORE YOU MOVE ON

If you start to strengthen too early you can irritate or even re-injure your elbow. I cannot stress enough the importance of pain-free strengthening. “No pain no gain” does not apply here. There is a huge difference between post workout soreness and pain caused by injury.

So we are going to start very slow and progress.
I am going to show you all these exercises with The Pronator. I personally invented The Pronator to help people just like you get rid of elbow pain for life. Remember the most important thing, once your pain is gone, is to strengthen those muscles so they can handle all the activities in your life without getting re-injured.

To start each exercise you are going to complete the motions below without weight.

Then you are going to use the weight that you purchased with the device or any 1-2# dumbbell you have at home. The next important detail is that when you start to use The Pronator with a new weight you need to grip the handle in the middle of the device. This will decrease the amount of force placed on your healing elbow.

For each exercise, you are going to start with 10 repetitions and 2 sets twice a day. Once you are able to complete the 10 repetitions without pain than you can increase the reps to 12 on the next day. Work your way up to 20 pain-free repetitions before increasing weight. It is important that you do not change weight the same day, most of the soreness and pain you will not feel until 12-24 hours later. If you complete the 20 repetitions for 2 sets twice a day and the next day you do not have elbow pain or soreness, then you can move your hand down the handle or increase the weight on the end.

Remember this is not a sprint, it is a marathon. You are trying to heal an injury.

2 sets of 10 reps twice a day for the exercises below.

*All exercise should be done with slow and controlled motions.*
Pronation and Supination:

Start with arm support and wrist off the edge of a stable surface. While holding The Pronator, rotate your hand palm up to palm down.

To increase bicep activation during this motion, try with your arm unsupported.
EXERCISES

Dumbbell Wrist Flexion and Extension:

Place your arm on a stable surface, with your palm up and hand over the edge of the surface. Holding a dumbbell, move your hand from the extended to flexed position.

Repeat this exercise with your palm facing down; moving from the flexed to the extended position.

Grip Strength:

A stress/squeeze ball works best for this exercise. Otherwise, a towel or rolled up sock will also work.

Place the ball in your hand and gently squeeze the ball and then release.
EXERCISES

Radial Deviation:
Start with your arm supported and wrist off the edge of a stable surface. Allow your wrist to tilt away from your body and then return by pulling up.

Ulnar Deviation:
Start with your arm supported and elbow resting on a stable surface. Start by holding The Pronator with wrist straight (or in a neutral position) then tilt your wrist towards the ceiling. While controlling the motion slowly lower The Pronator back to the starting position.
EXERCISES

One group of muscles people fail to strengthen when they have elbow pain is their shoulder muscles. You want to specifically strengthen your rotator cuff muscles. This can be done with these two exercises:

Shoulder Internal and External Rotation:

**External Rotation:** To do this exercise with dumbbells you will need to lie on your side. Rest your arm on your side and then bend your elbow to 90 degrees. Holding the weight in your hand, rotate your arm up toward the ceiling.

**Internal Rotation:** To do this exercise with dumbbells you will need to lie on your side. Let your arm rest next to you and bend your elbow 90 degrees. Holding the weight in your hand, rotate your arm up toward the ceiling.
CONCLUSION

For a complete list of exercises that could be done with The Pronator go to http://www.thepronator.com/exercise-chart.html

You will continue to do these exercises for at least one month after your pain has gone away. This will help continue to build the strength in your arm and help prevent re-injury. To maintain arm strength you could these exercises twice a week indefinitely.

I hope that you follow these directions and you live an elbow pain-free life. If you wish to contact me please do so through my website http://www.thepronator.com/contact.html.

I would love your feedback, let me know how this helped.

Best wishes on your recovery,

JR
Jonathon Rosploch DPT, CSCS