

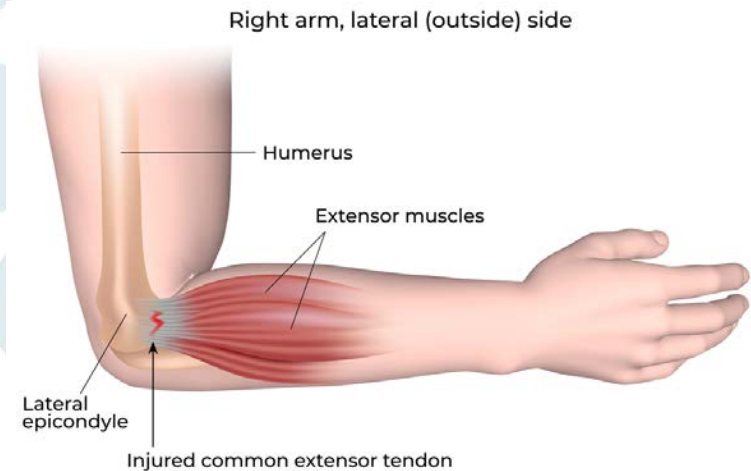
PATIENT  
INFORMATION  
LEAFLET

# Tennis Elbow (Lateral Epicondylitis)

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## Introduction

Tennis elbow is pain on the outer side of the elbow joint. The 'common extensor tendon' is usually the offending structure. This tendon is responsible for lifting your hand backwards, or up in the air.



## Causes of a Tennis Elbow

Tennis elbow is thought to occur due to repeated minor trauma to the tendon. This is often a result of overuse of the tendon through heavy, repetitive manual work. This is most often repeated gripping activities. Historically, tennis elbow was thought to be an inflammatory condition. This thinking has now changed. Current evidence has demonstrated inflammation does not play a major role in tennis elbow.

Tennis elbow can occur at any age, but more often occurs in people aged between 35 and 55.

## Symptoms of Tennis Elbow

People with tennis elbow will complain of pain on the outside of the elbow. Pain will be worse with activities that involve gripping and wrist movements.

## Diagnosis of Tennis Elbow

Tennis elbow is diagnosed with a thorough history and examination. Scans are not often helpful when making the diagnosis of tennis elbow.

## Self management of Tennis Elbow

### Rest

Limit hand movements that aggravate your pain. It is important to allow time for your symptoms to settle.

### Bracing

Tennis elbow braces can be used. Bracing aims to offload the area giving your elbow chance to heal. Braces can be purchased off the shelf and online.

### Painkillers

Various over the counter pain killers are available for the management of pain. These can be in the form of tablets or gels. If you have any questions your local pharmacy will be able to advise about what is safe.

### Physiotherapy

Stretching and strengthening exercises can be used both to treat the initial flare as well as to reduce the risk of relapse.

# Exercises for Tennis Elbow

## Exercise 1: Wrist Extensor Stretch



- Place the back of your hand against a wall keeping your elbow fully extended.
- Gently put pressure through the back of your hand.
- You should feel a stretch in your elbow

## Exercise 2: Resisted Wrist Extension



- Place your forearm on a hard surface, palm facing down.
- Hold a weighted object, such as a water bottle.
- Gently lower the water bottle until your wrist is fully flexed.
- At this point, using your opposite hand, help your wrist back up.