

Orthopedic Clinic

Talks About Tennis Elbow

Is My Elbow Pain Tennis Elbow?

I don't play tennis!

If you're suffering from tender, painful and sore areas around the outside of the elbow, it could be an indicator of lateral epicondylitis, commonly known as tennis elbow. Regardless of whether you play tennis, tennis elbow can cause a swelling and strain of the extensor tendon in the elbow. When this happens, rest and common care like ice and anti-inflammatories can help it feel better, but if the action continues that caused the flare-up, the condition can quickly become chronic. Advanced Bone & Joint of Texas can help diagnose and treat conditions such as tennis elbow.

"Tennis elbow can be a painful condition that causes a person to be reluctant about using that arm or unable to grip anything," said Advanced Bone & Joint of Texas' Medical Director, Dr. J. Scott Quinby. "This can really affect the patient's quality of life and it is something that we often can successfully address."

Causes of Tennis Elbow

Tennis elbow is caused by a repetitive motion which puts strain on the tendon attached to the bottom of the elbow. It becomes worse with overuse. While swinging a tennis racquet can be one culprit, it could also be caused by hands-on professions such as carpenters, meat processors, painters, chefs, plumbers, bricklayers, weight lifters and movers.

When a motion causes the wrist to bend backwards while straining to lift or grip something, the extensor tendon is stressed. When this motion and strain become repetitive, the tendon becomes irritated and injured.

However, tennis elbow isn't always the result of repetitive action. Acute tennis elbow can be caused by a single incident. As suggested from the nickname, tennis elbow can be the result of bad form when backhanding the tennis ball. When the driving force of the ball strikes the racquet, if the wrist is bent improperly, the force of the impact is directed to

the elbow joint and can cause micro-tears or inflammation of the tendon. If the arm is held straight, the force is dispersed across the arm and damage usually doesn't occur. This can be the case in various sports as well as heavy-lifting occupations.

Treatment of Tennis Elbow

If rest, an elbow brace and over-the-counter medications aren't working, your orthopaedic surgeon may recommend physical therapy and exercises to help your tennis elbow. It is possible that motion modification—such as correcting your form in sports—along with rest, will be enough to help your tendon heal. Additional treatments such as shock wave therapy, plasma injections, or steroid injections can also be successful.

However, extreme cases of tennis elbow may require surgery to alleviate. In this procedure, a small incision is made and the damaged parts of the tendon are removed and the tendon and muscle are reattached to the bones.

"After carefully diagnosing your tennis elbow," said Dr. Quinby, "we will work through treatment options, starting with the most minimally-invasive options first. We want to get you back to enjoying a firm grip and a pain-free use of your arm."

Get an appointment with our orthopaedic specialist today!

Don't continue to live with a chronic case of tennis elbow, unable to lift a coffee mug or grip a door handle. At Advanced Bone & Joint of Texas, we want to help you find relief from the constant pain. Call us today @ 469-929-0615 for an initial exam to diagnose your pain.

Visit us at one of our two convenient locations:

- Rockwall – Rockwall Medical Center, 810 E. Ralph Hall Pkwy, Suite 140
- Plano – Plano Medical Office Building III, 4001 W 15th St., Suite 180