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# Golfer's Elbow (Medial Epicondylitis)

**HOME EXERCISE PROGRAM**

Golfer's elbow is an overuse problem of the tendon that attaches to the inside of the elbow. This tendon bends the wrist and turns the palm down. It is common with gripping, lifting, throwing and racquet sports, not just golf. The tendon recovers best with gradually loaded, slow exercise.

### How to do this program

- Pain rule: mild discomfort up to 3 out of 10 during exercise is okay if it settles by the next morning. Stop any exercise that causes sharp pain.
- Move slowly and with control. Breathe normally; do not hold your breath.
- Do Phase 1 daily. Add Phase 2 when gripping is less painful, usually after 1-2 weeks.
- The slow lowering (eccentric) exercise is the most important part of this program.
- Most people improve over 6-12 weeks; full recovery can take several months.

## Phase 1 · Stretch and settle pain (weeks 0-2)

*Gentle stretches and holds that calm the tendon.*



### 1. Wrist Flexor Stretch

Hold your arm straight in front with the palm up. Gently pull the fingers and palm back until you feel a stretch on the inside of the forearm.

**Hold 30 sec · 3 reps · 2 times a day**



### 2. Isometric Wrist Flexion

Forearm on a table, palm up. Press the palm up into your other hand without moving. Hold 30-45 seconds at a moderate effort.

***Make it harder:*** *Press a little harder each week.*

**5 reps · 2 times a day**

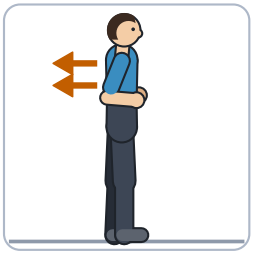


### 3. Grip Squeeze

Squeeze a soft ball or putty and hold 3-5 seconds, then relax. Keep it pain-free.

***Make it harder:*** *Use firmer putty.*

**3 sets of 10 · once a day**



### 4. Shoulder Blade Squeeze

Stand tall with arms at your sides. Squeeze your shoulder blades down and back without shrugging. Hold 5 seconds.

***Make it harder:*** *Do it with your arms out in a W shape.*

**10 reps · 2 times a day**

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## Phase 2 · Load the tendon (weeks 2-12)

*Continue the stretch once a day and add these strengthening exercises.*



### 5. Eccentric Wrist Flexion

Forearm on a table, palm up, wrist over the edge. Use the other hand to help curl the weight up, then lower it slowly over 3-5 seconds with the sore arm only. Start with 1-2 lb.

***Make it harder:*** *Add 1 lb when 15 reps feel easy.*

**3 sets of 15 · once a day**

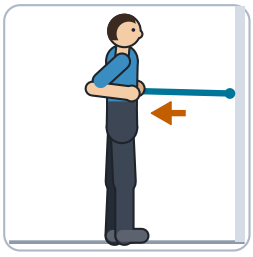


### 6. Forearm Rotation

Forearm on a table holding a hammer upright. Slowly turn the palm down, then palm up, taking 3-5 seconds for each turn.

***Make it harder:*** *Hold the handle farther from the head of the hammer.*

**3 sets of 10 · once a day**

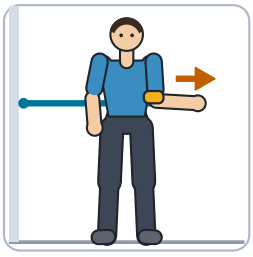


### 7. Band Row

Hold the band in front of you with arms straight. Pull your elbows back and squeeze the shoulder blades together, then return slowly.

***Make it harder:*** *Use a stronger band or step farther back.*

**3 sets of 12-15 · once a day**



### 8. Band External Rotation

Elbow at your side with a rolled towel under the arm, elbow bent 90°. Rotate the forearm outward against the band, then return slowly.

***Make it harder:*** *Use the next stronger band color.*

**3 sets of 12-15 · once a day**

### Everyday tips

- Ease your grip: use thicker or padded handles on tools, racquets and clubs.
- A counterforce strap worn on the upper forearm, just below the elbow, can ease pain during activity.
- Golfers: warm up before you play, avoid hitting off hard mats, and consider having your swing checked.

### Call the office if

- You have numbness or tingling in the ring and small fingers.
- Pain is not improving after 6-12 weeks of the program.
- You cannot grip or lift light objects.