BaylorScott&White
ORTHOPEDIC ASSOCIATES OF DALLAS
A member of HealthTexas Provider Network

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Tennis Elbow (Lateral Epicondylitis)

HOME EXERCISE PROGRAM

Tennis elbow is an overuse problem of the tendon that attaches to the outside of the elbow and straightens the wrist. It is common with gripping, lifting and computer work, not just tennis. 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)

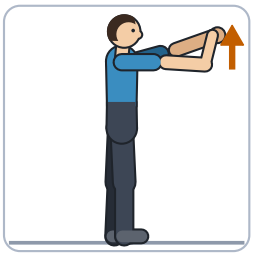
Gentle stretches and holds that calm the tendon.



1. Wrist Extensor Stretch

Hold your arm straight in front with the palm down. Use the other hand to gently bend the wrist down until you feel a stretch on top of the forearm.

Hold 30 sec · 3 reps · 2 times a day



2. Wrist Flexor Stretch

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

Hold 30 sec · 3 reps · 2 times a day



3. Isometric Wrist Extension

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

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

5 reps · 2 times a day



4. 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

This program is a guideline. Your doctor or therapist may adjust it based on your condition and progress.
Call the office for fever, wound drainage, calf pain or swelling, or new numbness or tingling.

Questions: 469.800.7200
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Phase 2 · Load the tendon (weeks 2-12)

Continue the stretches once a day and add these strengthening exercises.



5. Eccentric Wrist Extension

Forearm on a table, palm down, wrist over the edge. Use the other hand to lift 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

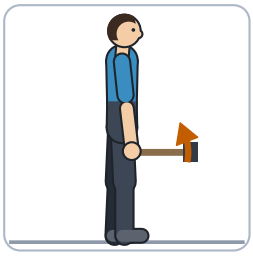


6. Forearm Rotation

Forearm on a table holding a hammer upright. Slowly turn the palm down, then palm up.

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

3 sets of 10 · once a day

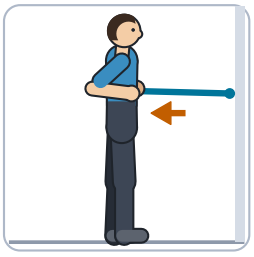


7. Hammer Lift (Radial Deviation)

Stand with the arm at your side holding a hammer by the handle. Lift the head of the hammer up by bending the wrist toward the thumb, then lower slowly.

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

3 sets of 10 · once a day



8. 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

Everyday tips

- Lift objects with the palm facing up when you can.
- A counterforce (tennis elbow) strap worn just below the elbow can ease pain during activity.
- Check your work setup: keep the wrist straight on the keyboard and mouse.

Call the office if

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