

When can I return to my sport or activity?

The goal of rehabilitation is to return you to your sport or activity as soon as is safely possible. If you return too soon you may worsen your injury, which could lead to permanent damage. Everyone recovers from injury at a different rate. Return to your sport or activity will be determined by how soon your elbow recovers, not by how many days or weeks it has been since your injury occurred. In general, the longer you have symptoms before you start treatment, the longer it will take to get better.

You may return to your sport or activity when you are able to forcefully grip your tennis racket, bat, or golf club, or do activities such as working at a keyboard without pain in your elbow. In sports such as gymnastics, it is important that you are able to bear weight on your elbow painlessly. It is important that there is no swelling around your injured elbow and that it has regained its normal strength compared to

your uninjured elbow. You must have full range of motion of your elbow.

How can I prevent tennis elbow?

To prevent tennis elbow:

- Use proper form during your activities, whether they are sports or job-related. For instance, be sure your tennis stroke is correct and that your tennis racket has the proper grip size.
- Warm up before playing tennis or doing other activities that involve your elbow or arm muscles. Gently stretch your elbow and arm muscles before and after exercise.
- Ice your elbow after exercise or work.

In job-related activities, be sure your posture is correct and that the position of your arms during your work doesn't cause overuse of your elbow or arm muscles.

LATERAL EPICONDYLITIS (TENNIS ELBOW) REHABILITATION EXERCISES

You may do the stretching exercises right away. You may do the strengthening exercises when stretching is nearly painless.

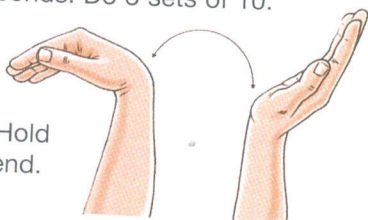
Stretching exercises

1. WRIST RANGE OF MOTION

A. Flexion: Gently bend your wrist forward. Hold for 5 seconds. Do 3 sets of 10.

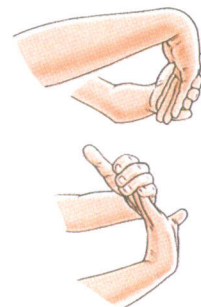
B. Extension: Gently bend your wrist backward. Hold this position 5 seconds. Do 3 sets of 10.

C. Side to side: Gently move your wrist from side to side (a handshake motion). Hold for 5 seconds at each end. Do 3 sets of 10.



WRIST ACTIVE RANGE OF MOTION

2. WRIST STRETCH: With one hand, help to bend the opposite wrist down by pressing the back of your hand and holding it down for 15 to 30 seconds. Next, stretch the hand back by pressing the fingers in a backward direction and holding it for 15 to 30 seconds. Keep your elbow straight during this exercise. Do 3 sets on each hand.

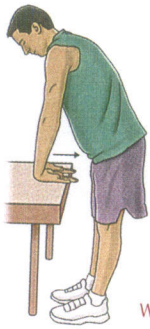


WRIST STRETCH

3. WRIST EXTENSION STRETCH: Stand at a table with your palms down, fingers flat, and elbows straight. Lean your body weight forward. Hold this position for 15 seconds. Repeat 3 times.



WRIST EXTENSION STRETCH

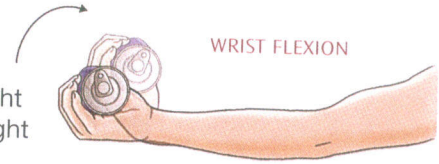


WRIST FLEXION STRETCH

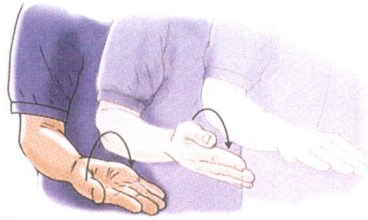
4. WRIST FLEXION STRETCH: Stand with the back of your hands on a table, palms facing up, fingers pointing toward your body, and elbows straight. Lean away from the table. Hold this position for 15 to 30 seconds. Repeat 3 times. During this stretch you may do ice massage over the area of pain.

Strengthening exercises

6. WRIST FLEXION: Hold a can or hammer handle in your hand with your palm facing up. Bend your wrist upward. Slowly lower the weight and return to the starting position. Do 3 sets of 10. Gradually increase the weight of the can or weight you are holding.

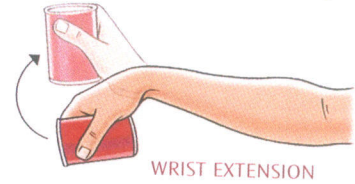


5. FOREARM PRONATION AND SUPINATION: With your elbow bent 90°, turn your palm upward and hold for 5 seconds. Slowly turn your palm downward and hold for 5 seconds. Make sure you keep your elbow at your side and bent 90° throughout this exercise. Do 3 sets of 10.



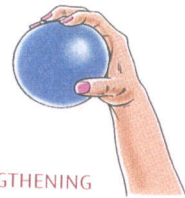
FOREARM PRONATION AND SUPINATION

7. WRIST EXTENSION: Hold a soup can or hammer handle in your hand with your palm facing down. Slowly bend your wrist upward. Slowly lower the weight down into the starting position. Do 3 sets of 10. Gradually increase the weight of the object you are holding.



When this exercise becomes pain free, do it with some weight in your hand such as a soup can or hammer handle.

8. GRIP STRENGTHENING: Squeeze a rubber ball and hold for 5 seconds. Do 3 sets of 10.



GRIP STRENGTHENING