

# Elbow Pain

## Baylor SportsCare

### We'll give you a healthy advantage.

Baylor SportsCare provides the winning combination of education, prevention, medical coverage and sports medicine for athletes of all ages.

- Access Baylor Health Care System specialized sports medicine physicians\* and services throughout the Metroplex
- Medical coverage at games and events utilizing physicians, nurses and licensed athletic trainers
- Educational programs on injury prevention & performance enhancement
- Comprehensive medical support for groups, teams and individuals

For more information about SportsCare, or for help in finding a physician who is right for you, contact your local SportsCare representative at

(972) 512-7404

or call **1-800-4BAYLOR** and ask for "Baylor SportsCare"

\*Physicians are members of the medical staff at one of Baylor health Care System's subsidiary, community or affiliated medical centers and are neither employees nor agents of those medical centers, Baylor University Medical Center or Baylor Health Care System. CE 12.07

## Definition

Elbow pain or tenderness may be caused by a traumatic or overuse injury. This describes aching or other discomfort in the elbow that is not related to direct injury.

## Causes

Elbow tendinitis, an inflammation and injury to the tendons -- soft tissues attaching muscle to bone.

People who play racquet sports are most likely to injure the tendons on the outside of the elbow. This condition is commonly called tennis elbow. Golfers are more likely to injure the tendons on the inside of the elbow.

Other common causes of elbow tendinitis are playing baseball, or overusing your wrist and arm.

Other common causes of elbow pain are:

- [Bursitis](#)-- inflammation of a fluid-filled cushion beneath the skin
- [Arthritis](#) -- narrowing of the joint space and loss of cartilage in the elbow
- Elbow [sprains](#)
- Infection of the elbow

## First Aid

- Apply ice up to 15 minutes every hour for the first day. Continue to apply ice every 3 to 4 hours for up to 3 days. Wrap the ice in a cloth -- do not apply ice directly to the skin.
- Wrap the elbow with a bandage, such as an ACE bandage to keep the elbow immobilized
- Keep the elbow elevated above your heart, if possible.
- Give the elbow joint complete rest for at least 2 days. DO NOT return to the activity that caused the problem for at least 3 weeks. Then, gradually strengthen the muscles around your elbow. A physical therapist can teach you how to do this.
- While you are resting the joint, take pain relievers such as acetaminophen or ibuprofen.
- After the initial rest period, you should begin to gradually strengthen the muscles around the elbow through gentle flexibility exercises.

## When to Contact a Medical Professional

- You have prolonged tendinitis that does not improve with home care
- Pain is due to direct elbow injury.
- There is obvious deformity.
- You are unable to use the elbow.
- You have a fever or swelling and redness of your elbow.

## Prevention

- Reduce the activity that causes the pain.
- Warm-up slowly. Stretch the forearm before, during and after exercise.
- Use an "elbow sleeve" to help keep your arm warm while playing
- Tennis: use the correct grip size, a two-handed backhand, and proper tension racquet strings
- Perform regular stretching and strengthening exercises



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