

Golfer's Elbow: Care Instructions

Your Care Instructions

The pain and soreness in the inner part of your elbow is caused by a problem called golfer's elbow. Bending the wrist over and over again has hurt the tendons that attach to your inner elbow. The muscles in your forearm also may hurt.

Golfer's elbow usually gets better with treatment at home.

Follow-up care is a key part of your treatment and safety. Be sure to make and go to all appointments, and call your doctor if you are having problems. It's also a good idea to know your test results and keep a list of the medicines you take.

How can you care for yourself at home?

- Rest your elbow and wrist. Try to avoid movements that are painful. You may have to do this for weeks to months. Follow your doctor's directions for how long to rest.
- Put ice or a cold pack on your elbow for 10 to 20 minutes at a time. Try to do this every 1 to 2 hours for the next 3 days (when you are awake) or until the swelling goes down. Put a thin cloth between the ice and your skin.
- Prop up the sore arm on a pillow when you ice it or anytime you sit or lie down during the next 3 days. Try to keep it above the level of your heart. This will help reduce swelling.
- Take pain medicine exactly as directed.
 - If the doctor gave you a prescription medicine for pain, take it as prescribed.
 - If you are not taking a prescription pain medicine, ask your doctor if you can take an over-the-counter medicine.
- If your doctor gave you a brace or splint, use it as directed. A "counterforce" brace is a strap around the forearm, just below the elbow. It may ease the pressure on the tendon and may spread force throughout the arm.
- Follow your doctor's or physical therapist's directions for exercise.

To prevent golfer's elbow

- After your elbow has healed, learn the best techniques for your work or sport. A physical or occupational therapist can help you.

When should you call for help?

Call your doctor now or seek immediate medical care if:

- Your pain gets worse.
- You cannot bend your elbow normally.
- You have tingling, weakness, or numbness in your hand and fingers.
- Your arm or hand is cool or pale or changes color.

Watch closely for changes in your health, and be sure to contact your doctor if:

- You have work problems caused by your elbow pain.
- Your pain is not better after 2 weeks.

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