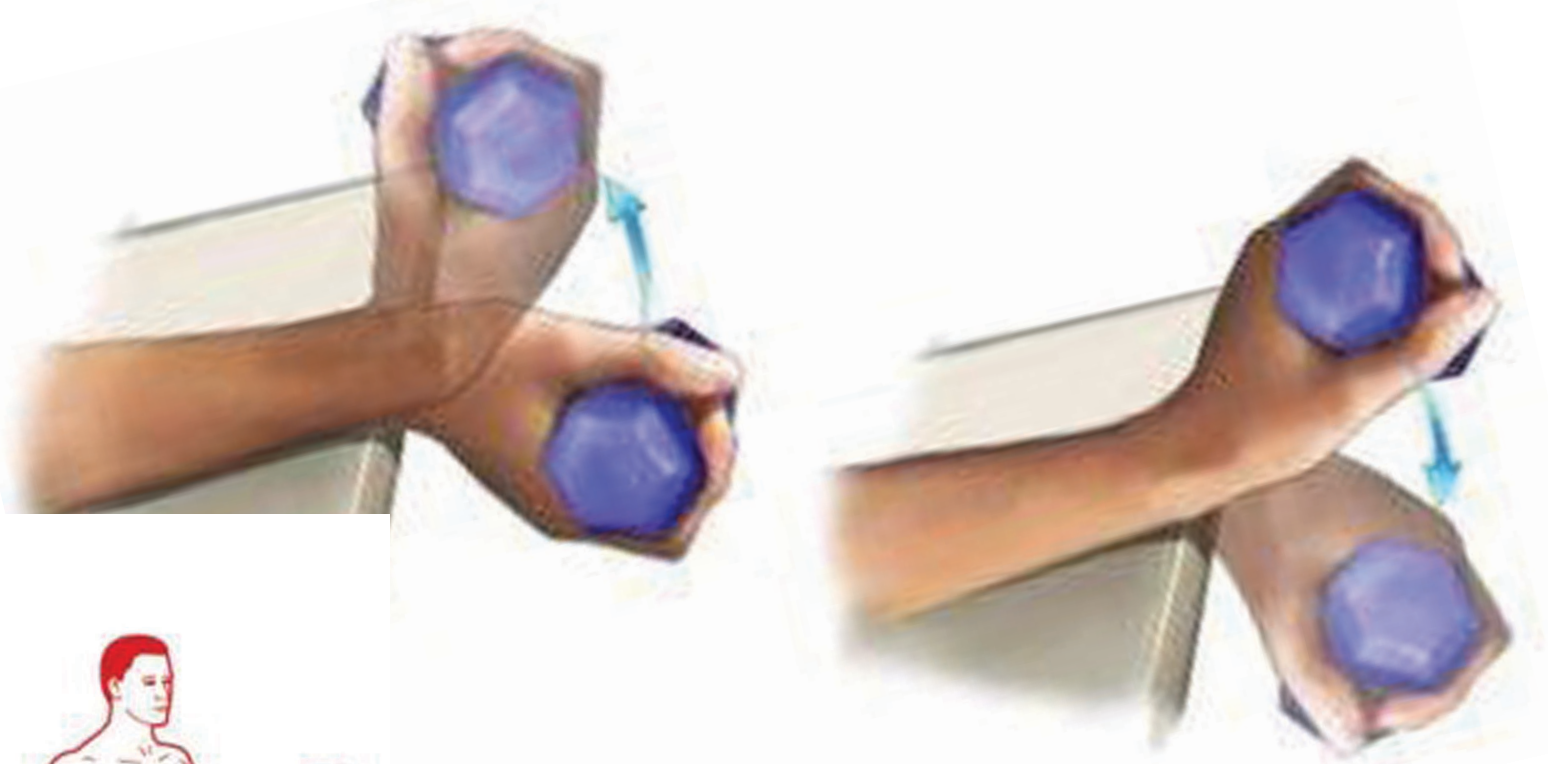


**E**PICONDYLITIS is a very common chronic condition that affects the elbow. It is also more commonly known as golfers or tennis elbow, which affects the inside or the outside of the elbow, respectively.

This injury is most often caused by overuse, particularly with repetitive movements of the wrist and arm. The muscles are overworked, and their tendons become damaged and irritated from performing the same movement over and over.

The pain is typically felt on or around the bony bumps that you can feel on either side of your elbow. This is because the muscles of our forearms attach on to these sites through common tendons. The muscles that flex our wrist (flexors) attach on the inside bump, while the muscles responsible for extension (extensors) attach on the outside bump. Pain from epicondylitis is usually described as a dull or achy type that is worse during and after activity.

## COMMON INJURY: EPICONDYLITIS



### TREATMENT

Icing the elbow will help decrease the pain. Follow the 20-minute on- 20 minute off guideline, using ice cubes or crushed ice. Rest and taking an over the counter anti-inflammatory medicine will also help manage the pain, however stretching and strengthening will help prevent the injury from re-occurring.

#### Forearm stretches

- Hold the injured arm straight out in front of your body with the elbow straight and the palm up.
- Now use the other hand to gently pull the wrist down and back (toward the floor), until you feel a stretch in the forearm.
- Hold this position for 30 seconds, and repeat three times.
- To stretch the other side of the forearm, simply repeat the stretch described above, but begin with the palm of the injured arm down. Then use your other hand to pull the wrist down and back (towards floor), as before.
- Stretching can be done daily, as long as it is not increasing your pain.

### STRENGTHENING THE ELBOW

When your elbow is feeling better, it is important to strengthen the surrounding muscles to protect the joint and avoid further injury. Choose exercises that work all of the muscles that surround and cross the elbow. Exercises such as bicep curls and triceps kickbacks are basic examples. It is also important to target the forearm flexors and extensors specifically. This can be accomplished by performing wrist curls, and with grip exercises such as wringing out a wet towel. Start with lighter weights and build up to performing 3 sets of 10-15 repetitions, 2-3 times a week.

It is important to avoid rushing recovery with any type of injury. If your pain is not improving or is getting worse, consult your family doctor or local athletic therapist. They will be happy to create a rehab program specific to your goals that will get you back to the activities that you love!

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**Written by Taylor Post,**  
Certified Athletic Therapist

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