

TENNIS ELBOW

At this time of the year, when the sun starts to shine and Wimbledon is just around the corner (June 21 - July 4), many people who have been fairly sedentary all through the winter, get out their tennis racquets and dust them off.

Over the next few months, chiropractors are going to see many injuries related to this sport because people have taken too enthusiastically to it.

The risk of injury in any type of sport increases with age because both the muscle strength and the elasticity of the ligaments decreases past the age of about thirty.

Obviously, if you are very fit, you warm up, you train appropriately throughout the year and you are careful not to continue exercising if you are ill or are injured, you are less likely to need help from a chiropractor.

The so called **Tennis Elbow** is one of the most common injuries seen from tennis, together with back and shoulder injuries. The term Tennis Elbow is used to describe pain found on the outer part of the elbow and the upper part of the forearm.

Tennis Elbow is due to inflammation of the tendon and bony protruberence at the outer part of the elbow. Tennis Elbow is in fact an overuse injury. Repetitive, forceful movements at the wrist, which bring the thumb outwards and the palm upwards, can cause shortening of the muscles. This causes the attachment of these muscles at the outer part of the elbow to be placed under considerable tension and a sudden movement at the wrist may cause a tear in the muscle and tendon.

The repetitive action of gripping, twisting and



moving the wrist can cause inflammation of the tendon that attaches to the muscles of the forearm which straighten the fingers and the wrist.

What are the symptoms?

1. Pain over the outside of the elbow, which may travel up or down the arm.
2. Wrist weakness.
3. Tenderness over the outside of the elbow.

What are the causes of tennis elbow?

Obviously, playing tennis may be one of the causes e.g. if you have a faulty backhand technique or a faulty grip, but other racquet sports can also cause the same injury. You may be surprised to hear that D.I.Y.



and gardening can cause this injury (e.g. the use of a screw driver or the use of garden clippers).

Professionals such as electricians and carpenters are also prone to this injury.

Tennis elbow is a very disabling condition for some people. Some sufferers find it difficult to perform simple tasks like writing, spreading butter on a sandwich or holding a cup of tea.

What is the treatment?

Initially, it is important to reduce the inflammation and to rest the elbow as much as possible. The use of ice is very effective in the first two or three days but sometimes has to be used for a longer period. Sometimes a tennis elbow brace may be needed (not an elbow strap), particularly if the problem is persistent.

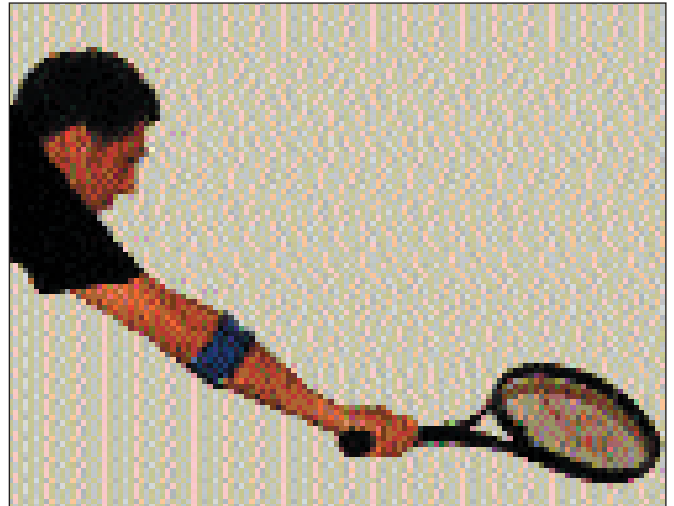
Obviously, any faulty techniques in the game must be corrected. The chiropractor will also examine any area relating to the function of the your elbow and muscles of the forearm, such as the wrist, shoulder and, more importantly, the neck.

The second part of the treatment involves increasing the blood circulation to the tissues. This can be done by alternating hot and cold or the use of ultrasound. When the pain has subsided, it is possible to undertake a rehabilitation programme of power and stretching exercises for the elbow and the affected muscles, taking care that the exercises are done slowly and carefully so as not to make the condition recur.

Most injuries occur either at the beginning or the end of the game. Often, at the beginning of the game, this is because proper warm up techniques haven't been used whilst towards the end of the game, injuries may occur when people are more fatigued.

Don't forget that a tennis ball travelling at 30 miles per hour is equivalent to lifting 55lbs!

If you think that you, or someone you know, may be suffering from *Tennis Elbow*, or any other injury relating to tennis, please ask your chiropractor now before the problem becomes too severe.



✂️ Please give this to a friend or colleague if you think Chiropractic may help

HEALTHCARE
CHIROPRACTIC CLINIC



20 GROSVENOR AVE • HAYES • MIDDX • UB4 8NL
T: 020 8845 7881 E: english@chiropractor.demon.co.uk
www.hayeshealthcare.co.uk

JEREMY ENGLISH DC MSTRT
RACHEL KING MSC DC

798 ST ALBANS RD • WATFORD • HERTS • WD25 9FF
T: 01923 675000 EMAIL: info@watfordhealthclinic.co.uk
www.watfordhealthclinic.co.uk

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