

Articles by our Physical Therapists

27. Tennis Elbow

TENNIS ELBOW SYNDROME

Tennis Elbow Syndrome, also known as Lateral Epicondylitis, is a condition commonly treated here at Baker Valley Physical Therapy. This condition is characterized by pain in the elbow, which is particularly bad whenever the hand and wrist are being used, as in grasping, squeezing, or lifting. The pain is located in the lateral elbow, and may radiate down the forearm and even up into the proximal arm. However, the condition is also characterized by having little or no pain when the arm is not active. Tennis Elbow Syndrome is typically caused by either an injury or overuse of the hand, especially repeated movements or continuous grasping. Treatment is easier in milder cases, but can still be a stubborn challenge if the activity or behavior that causes or exacerbates the condition is not modified. For those people who must use their hands for work, Tennis Elbow Syndrome can be very difficult to overcome and may continue indefinitely. A comprehensive treatment plan includes finding ways to continue function, often using adaptive techniques and equipment, without worsening the condition. A Tennis Elbow Strap, worn around the forearm, may be very helpful. An occupational or physical therapist may use manual therapy techniques, including instrument-assisted soft tissue mobilization (e.g. ASTYM) to rehabilitate the musculotendinous junction of the affected lateral epicondyle. Other modalities, including ultrasound, iontophoresis, and heat or ice may be used. Stretching, strengthening, and finally return to full functional use of the hand/arm complete the rehab process.

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