

Tennis Elbow

ole wringing exercise using a small hand towel.

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Method

1. Roll up the hand towel
2. With the arms extended, grasp the towel with the affected side placed in flexion
3. Then exert maximum wring pressure (*Fig 1*)
 - First flexing the wrist for 10 seconds
 - Then extending the wrist for 10 seconds

This is an isometric hold+contraction.



Fig 1 Initial grip for 'wringing exercise'

Frequency

This exercise should be performed *only* twice a day, initially for 10 seconds in each direction. After each week increase the time by 5 seconds in each twisting direction until 60 seconds is reached (week 11). This level is maintained indefinitely.

Note: Despite severe initial pain, the patient must persist, using as much force as possible.

Exercises

Stretching and strengthening exercises for the forearm muscles represent the best management for tennis elbow. The muscles are strengthened by the use of hand-held weights or dumbbells. A suitable starting weight is 0.5kg, building up gradually (increasing by 0.5kg) to 5kg, depending on the patient.

Fig 2 Tennis elbow: (a) dumbbell exercise for classical case (palm facing down)

Method

1. To perform this exercise the patient sits in a chair beside a table.
2. The arm is rested on the table so that the wrist extends over the edge.
3. The weight is grasped with the palm facing downwards (*Fig 2a*).
4. The weight is slowly raised and lowered by flexing and extending the wrist.
5. The flexion/extension wrist movement is repeated 10 times, with a rest for 1 minute and the program repeated twice.

This exercise should be performed every day until the patient can play tennis, work or use the arm without pain.

For medical epicondylitis (forearm tennis elbow, golfer's elbow), perform the same exercises but with the palm of the hand facing upward. (*Fig 2b*).



Fig 2 Tennis elbow: (b) dumbbell exercise for medial epicondylitis-forearm tennis elbow, golfer's elbow (palm facing up)