

MEDIAL EPICONDYLITIS (GOLFER'S ELBOW)

Overview

This condition, commonly called golfer's elbow, is an inflammation of the tendons that connect the muscles of the forearm to the elbow. The pain is primarily felt at the medial epicondyle, the bony bump on the inner side of the elbow.

Inside the Elbow

The elbow joint is a complex group of bones, muscles, ligaments and tendons. Medial epicondylitis involves the flexor muscles, which control the flexion of the wrist and fingers, and the flexor tendons, which anchor the muscles to the medial epicondyle.

Causes

Medial epicondylitis is caused by specific repetitive motions of the wrist and arm. The stress placed on the forearm by swinging a golf club is a common culprit. This stress causes tiny tears to develop in one or more flexor tendons. This results in inflammation and pain.

Symptoms

This condition typically causes pain and tenderness that is centered on the medial epicondyle. This pain may radiate along the forearm and wrist. The elbow may feel stiff, and the hand and wrist may feel weak. A person may experience numbness or tingling in the ring finger and little finger.

Risk Factors

Medial epicondylitis typically affects people older than 35. It is a common complaint of athletes who play golf and racquet sports. It also commonly affects people who play throwing sports, such as baseball and football, and people who participate in weight training. Certain occupations can also raise a person's risk. This condition is common among painters, carpenters and people who use computers.

Treatment

Treatment options may include rest, ice, anti-inflammatory medications and stretching exercises. A physician may recommend an arm brace or wrist splint and physical therapy or massage therapy. Steroid injections or PRP injections may also provide relief.

