

# PLAYING THROUGH



Healthy Life. Better Game.



constant pain in the elbow area, or it may only be felt when lifting something in combination with gripping and twisting. It is most common from repetitive activities that result in overuse of these tendons and muscles. If a tendonitis becomes chronic or reoccurring, this can lead to degeneration of the tendon, which is then referred to as a tendonosis. In some cases of this tendonitis, corticosteroids may be offered, though it has been found that this can increase the risk of tears in the muscle.

What can you do? The first step in addressing golfer's or tennis elbow is to temporarily stop all activities that provoke or aggravate symptoms. The goal of this is to reduce inflammation and allow the tendons and muscles to heal, as well as avoid re-injury. Ice and NSAIDS are also

helpful in the early stages of inflammation to promote healing.

The next step is to restore normal range of motion, or movement of the wrist and hand, as well as fingers. Once normal range of motion has been restored, strengthening is gradually progressed, including addressing grip strength as well as return to functional activities, such as carrying heavier items and weight bearing through the arms. 'Eccentric' strengthening has been proven to be most effective in strengthening muscles that are affected by tendinitis, while gradually increasing the load placed on the muscle. Hands-on techniques such as massage and joint mobilizations have also been found to be beneficial for tennis or golfers elbow in order to restore proper mobility.

Instrument Assisted Soft Tissue Massage (IASTM) is a

## ELBOW ROOM

Raise your hand if you got yours **playing tennis**. Or from raking, gardening, chopping wood, or typing(!)

Raise your hand if you got yours from **playing golf**. Or from weightlifting, racquet sports, baseball or softball, using vibrating tools, or painting.

*Epicondylitis*, or *tendonitis* of the muscles on the inside or outside of the elbow typically presents with pain on the inside of the elbow when lifting the hand or wrist, twisting the forearm, or clenching a fist, symptoms of golfer's elbow. The area may feel slightly tender or slightly swollen, especially in the early stages.

With tennis elbow, pain can spread from the outside of the elbow to the wrist and forearm. It may be





well-known treatment technique that has been found to improve soft tissue function and mobility, as well as decrease pain. IASTM uses instruments, such as Graston or cupping to remove scar tissue and stimulate the healing process. This is especially beneficial in recurring episodes of epicondylitis.

Application of IASTM involves these steps by a qualified therapist:

**Assessment:** An assessment of the patient's range of motion, identifying areas of pain or dysfunction, and determining the appropriate treatment areas.

**Tool Selection:** The therapist selects the appropriate tool for the specific treatment area and the level of soft tissue dysfunction.

**Application:** The therapist applies the tool to the skin in a specific direction, using a variety of strokes, pressure, and angles to break up adhesions, fascial restrictions, and scar tissue.

**Follow-up:** After treatment, the therapist reassesses the patient's range of motion and provides exercises to help maintain the improved soft tissue function and mobility.

It's important to note that IASTM is not appropriate for everyone, and should only be performed by a trained and licensed therapist. As with any manual therapy technique, there are potential risks and contraindications to consider, such as bruising, skin irritation, and deep vein thrombosis. Therefore, it is important for therapists to thoroughly assess the patient and determine if IASTM is the appropriate treatment option for them.

Epicondylitis can occur at any age, however is most prevalent between the ages of 30-50. While in some acute cases rest, ice and activity modifications are all that's needed, others require the attention of a skilled physical therapist to address muscle imbalances and improve tissue healing to avoid recurrence and return to normal daily activities.

with Alyssa Melendez, PT, DPT  
for The Magnolia News



OPEN IN  
GREEN  
COVE  
SPRINGS!

**GREEN COVE SPRINGS NEAR ACE**  
1305 N. ORANGE AVE  
SUITE 118  
GREEN COVE SPRINGS, FL 32043  
(P): 904-531-5500

**DOCTOR'S INLET - THE SILOS ON 220**  
2219 COUNTY ROAD 220  
SUITE 304  
MIDDLEBURG, FL 32068  
(P): 904-644-7722

## Physical Therapy Specialists

**Individualized One-on-One Patient Care**

- Outpatient Orthopedics - Pre/Post-Operative Care, Joint Pain, & Weakness
- Pelvic Rehabilitation - Pelvic Pain, Incontinence, Pelvic Prolapse & Peri-Partum Care
- Vertigo, Balance Training, Fall Prevention
- TMD, Headaches & Jaw Pain
- Lymphedema Treatment
- Youth Performance Training & Injury Prevention
- Golf Performance Assessment









Medicare • Tricare • VA Community Health • Most Commercial Insurances • Competitive Cash Pay Rates

[www.summitspecialists.com](http://www.summitspecialists.com)



