

Prevention and Treatment of Tennis Elbow

[Wellness Chinese Medicine – Dr. Cao Yafei](#)

www.wcmclinic.com

I. What is Tennis Elbow?

Tennis elbow (medical term: lateral epicondylitis) is an inflammation and pain condition caused by overuse of the extensor tendons in the forearm. It is characterized primarily by pain on the outer side of the elbow. The condition is commonly called "tennis elbow" because it is often seen in tennis players. However, most individuals diagnosed with tennis elbow do not play tennis. It is frequently associated with repetitive wrist and forearm motions, commonly found in occupations like plumbing, painting, and carpentry.

II. Prevention of Tennis Elbow

1. **Adopt Proper Posture:** Maintain proper posture during work or exercise. Tennis players should learn the correct grip technique to avoid overexerting the wrist.
2. **Avoid Overuse:** Minimize prolonged repetitive forearm activities, such as typing or screwing bolts. Balance work and rest to give muscles recovery time.
3. **Strengthen Muscles:** Regularly strengthen forearm and wrist muscles to improve endurance and reduce fatigue. Tools like grip trainers or resistance bands can be used for targeted training.
4. **Daily Protection:** Wear elbow supports during strenuous activities and keep the elbow warm to avoid cold-related stiffness.

III. Treatment for Tennis Elbow

1. **Rest:** Cease activities causing pain to prevent further injury.
2. **Ice Therapy:** During the acute phase, ice the elbow for 15-20 minutes daily to reduce inflammation and pain.
3. **Massage and Heat Therapy:** Enhance local blood circulation and accelerate recovery.
4. **Acupuncture:** Stimulate meridians and acupuncture points to alleviate pain and reduce inflammation.
5. **Manual Therapy:** Use techniques to relieve muscle and fascia tension and spasms.

6. **Ultrasound or Laser Therapy:** Reduce inflammation and promote tissue healing.
7. **Medication:** Nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs), such as ibuprofen, can be taken orally or applied topically to reduce inflammation and pain.
8. **Local Injections:** Localized injections of long-acting steroids and anesthetics can be effective for acute conditions.

IV. Rehabilitation Training

1. **Stretching Exercises:** Gently stretch and extend forearm and wrist muscles and tendons to improve flexibility.
2. **Strength Training:** Gradually increase forearm and wrist strength training to prevent recurrence.

Through proper prevention and treatment, most patients with tennis elbow can return to normal activities and avoid recurrence.