

Golfer's Elbow (Medial Epicondylitis)

What You Need to Know

What Is Golfer's Elbow?

Golfer's elbow — medically called medial epicondylitis or medial epicondylalgia — is a painful condition of the tendons attaching the forearm flexor and pronator muscles to the inner side of the elbow (the medial epicondyle). Like tennis elbow, it is a tendinopathy — a degenerative condition of the tendon tissue — rather than purely an inflammatory condition, and it affects far more non-golfers than golfers. It is common in people who perform repetitive gripping, flexing, or forearm-rotation movements.

What Does It Feel Like?

- Pain and tenderness on the inner side of the elbow — the "bump" on the inside
- Pain that worsens with gripping, especially with the wrist bent downward
- Aching in the inner forearm that may extend toward the wrist
- Weakness in the grip or wrist
- Pain with handshaking, lifting with palm up, or throwing
- Stiffness in the elbow — particularly in the morning

What Causes It?

- Repetitive wrist flexion and forearm pronation — common in golfers, baseball pitchers, climbers, plumbers
- Heavy or repetitive manual labor — construction, carpentry, factory work
- Weightlifting with poor wrist mechanics
- Age-related tendon degeneration

An Important Distinction — Could It Be the Ulnar Nerve?

The ulnar nerve runs right next to the medial epicondyle. If you experience numbness or tingling in the ring and little fingers alongside inner elbow pain, the nerve may be involved (cubital tunnel syndrome) — and this changes treatment. Your physical therapist will assess

for both.

When Should I Be Concerned?

- Numbness or tingling in the ring or little finger
- Elbow swelling or deformity after an injury
- No improvement after 3+ months of treatment

The Good News

Golfer's elbow responds very well to physical therapy using progressive tendon loading, activity modification, and technique correction. Most patients recover fully without surgery. Identifying and modifying the repetitive activities driving the problem is as important as the exercises themselves.

With a targeted PT program, most patients see significant improvement within **6 to 12 weeks**.

This information is for general educational purposes only and is not a substitute for a professional evaluation. Call us today — we have immediate openings with no waitlist.

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