REHAB EXERCISES FOR MEDIAL EPICONDYLITIS

Henry A. Stiene, MD

The exercises below are designed to help your injured tendon heal and regain full strength. They should not cause pain. If the strengthening exercises cause pain, stop them for 5-7 days and then try again. You cannot get this muscle tendon unit too strong and the goal is to progressively strengthen the muscle-tendon unit over a period of months and then maintain the strength. Most patients will start with only a few pounds but the goal for most women is to progress to 5-10 lbs., men up to 20-25 lbs.

**STRENGTHENING:** Perform the wrist curls as shown on the left. Weight should be light enough to allow 3 sets of 12-15 reps. If you do not have weights, place soup cans in a 1-2lb freezer storage bag and grab the end of the bag to do the exercises. If you can only do 3-4 reps, you are using too much weight. Once you can do 15-20 reps, increase weight by 1 lb.

Next, using a hammer or similar type weight as shown to the left, rotate the wrist from palm up to palm down. You should be able to do 3 sets of 20-25 reps. If using a hammer, eventually pull the head further from your hand to increase the leverage as you get stronger.

These exercises should not cause pain, only normal muscle soreness.

**STRETCHING:** Use the opposite hand to bend the wrist back as shown. Hold this stretch for 1 minute, relax for a few seconds, and repeat doing 5 one minute stretches. The stretch should not cause pain. Do this regimen at least twice daily.