TENNIS INJURIES

Tennis, played worldwide, is one of the most popular racket sports. A high number of tournaments for competitive tennis players may lead to overuse injuries, such as “tennis elbow” or wrist injuries. For noncompetitive tennis players, improper or inadequate physical and technique training may be the cause of overuse injuries. Although overuse injuries make up a large chunk of tennis injuries, the good news is that such injuries can be prevented with some changes to technique and training routines.

WHAT TYPES OF INJURIES ARE MOST COMMON IN TENNIS?

Two-thirds of tennis injuries are due to overuse and the other one-third is due to a traumatic injury or acute event. Overuse injuries most often affect the shoulders, wrists, and elbows.
WHAT ARE COMMON INJURIES AND TREATMENTS?

Tennis Elbow
The injury most heard about is “tennis elbow,” which is an overuse of the muscles that extend the wrist or bend it backwards. It is also the muscle most used when the tennis ball impacts the racquet. Proper strengthening of this muscle and other muscles around it, along with a regular warm-up routine, will help decrease the likelihood of experiencing tennis elbow. Paying attention to technical components such as grip size and proper technique can also help prevent this condition.

Muscle Strains
Muscle strains usually occur from quick, sudden moves. A good warm-up followed by proper stretching can help diminish muscle strains. The warm-up should include a slow jog, jumping jacks, or riding a bike at low intensity.

Proper stretching should be slow and deliberate. Do not bounce to stretch; hold the stretch 30 seconds or more. The best stretches are moving stretches, such as swinging your leg as far forward and backward or swinging your arms in circles and across your body. Proper stretching should last at least five minutes.

If you have any concerns about an injury or how to prevent future injuries speak with a sports medicine professional or athletic trainer. The athlete should return to play only when clearance is granted by a health care professional.

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REFERENCES


Sports Tips provide general information only and are not a substitute for your own good judgement or consultation with a physician. To order multiple copies of this fact sheet or learn more about sports injury prevention, please visit www.STOPSISportsInjuries.org.