

Biceps Tendonitis

Diagnosis Explanation:

Biceps tendonitis is **inflammation of the biceps tendon**, which connects the **biceps muscle to the shoulder and elbow**. It is commonly caused by **overuse, repetitive overhead movements, or strain from lifting**. Symptoms include **pain in the front of the shoulder, tenderness over the biceps tendon, weakness, and discomfort with lifting or reaching overhead**.

Specific Work Modifications:

- **If your job requires standing or walking:** Avoid **repetitive overhead reaching** and take breaks to rest the arm.
- **If your job involves lifting:** Avoid **lifting objects with the arm fully extended** or **repetitive pushing and pulling**. Use **both hands** when possible.
- **If your job is desk-based:** Keep the **shoulder relaxed**, use **arm support**, and avoid resting on the **affected arm for long periods**.
- **Avoid:** Overhead reaching, heavy lifting, repetitive pushing or pulling, and sleeping on the affected side.

Specific Activity Modifications:

- **If you play sports:** Avoid **throwing, swimming strokes, or overhead movements** until pain subsides.
- **If you do weightlifting:** Avoid **overhead presses, biceps curls, dips, and pull-ups**; focus on **controlled, pain-free movements**.
- **If you do yoga or Pilates:** Modify poses to **avoid deep shoulder extension and excessive arm weight-bearing**.
- **Avoid:** Repetitive overhead motions, heavy biceps exercises, and jerky arm movements.

Recommended Supplements:

- **Collagen Peptides** - 10g daily for tendon and joint repair.
- **Vitamin C** - 500mg daily to support collagen synthesis.
- **Glucosamine & Chondroitin** - 1500mg/1200mg daily for tendon health.
- **Omega-3 Fatty Acids** - 1000mg daily to reduce inflammation.
- **Turmeric (Curcumin)** - 500-1000mg daily for pain relief.

Recommended Nutrition and Hydration:

- **Increase Lean Protein** (chicken, fish, tofu, eggs) to support tendon repair.
- **Eat Anti-Inflammatory Foods** (berries, leafy greens, turmeric, nuts) to reduce swelling.

- **Consume Hydrating Foods** (cucumber, watermelon, citrus) to maintain tendon flexibility.
- **Limit Processed Foods & Sugars** to prevent inflammation.
- **Hydration:** Drink **8-10 cups of water daily** to support tendon recovery.

Home Exercise Prescription (Rehabilitation for Biceps Tendonitis)

Early Phase (0-2 Weeks, Reducing Pain & Inflammation):

- **RICE Protocol** - Rest, Ice (15-20 min, 3x/day), Compression, Elevation.
- **Pendulum Exercises** - Lean forward, let the arm hang, gently swing in small circles, **10 reps, 2x/day**.
- **Shoulder Blade Squeezes** - Pinch shoulder blades together, hold **5 seconds**, repeat **10 reps, 2x/day**.
- **Neck & Upper Trap Stretch** - Gently tilt head to the opposite side, hold **20 seconds, 3x/day**.

Strengthening Phase (2-6 Weeks, Improving Stability & Function):

- **Isometric Shoulder Holds** - Press palm against a wall without moving the shoulder, hold **5 seconds**, repeat **10 reps, 2x/day**.
- **Internal & External Rotation (Resistance Band)** - Keep elbow at **90 degrees**, rotate forearm inward and outward, **10 reps, 2x/day**.
- **Wall Slides** - Stand facing a wall, slowly slide hands up, **10 reps, 2x/day**.

Advanced Phase (6+ Weeks, Restoring Strength & Preventing Recurrence):

- **Lateral Arm Raises (Light Resistance)** - Raise arms to shoulder height, **10 reps, 2x/day**.
- **Scapular Stability Exercises (Resistance Band Rows)** - Pull resistance band toward chest, **10 reps, 2x/day**.
- **Modified Push-Ups (Wall or Knees)** - Maintain control, **10 reps, 2x/day**.

Helpful Books:

1. *The Shoulder Pain Solution: Simple Exercises to Prevent and Recover from Injury* - John M. Kirsch, MD.
2. *Overcoming Tendonitis: A Systematic Approach to the Treatment and Rehabilitation of Tendon Pain* - Andrew Burns.

Click here for more orthopedic patient information.

Contact a Key West orthopedic clinic or reach out to Dr. Jason Pirozzolo.