

Olecranon Bursitis

Explanation of Diagnosis

Olecranon bursitis occurs when the **bursa** (a fluid-filled sac that cushions the elbow) becomes inflamed, leading to **swelling, pain, and tenderness** at the back of the elbow. It can result from **trauma (direct impact), prolonged pressure (leaning on the elbow), infection, or repetitive movements**. If the swelling is red, warm, or associated with fever, an **infection (septic bursitis)** may be present, requiring medical treatment.

Specific Work Modifications

- **Avoid resting the elbow on hard surfaces;** use padding if necessary.
- **Limit repetitive bending and pressure on the elbow.**
- **Use a cushioned elbow sleeve** if frequent contact with hard surfaces is unavoidable.
- Take frequent breaks and adjust the workstation to reduce strain on the elbow.

Specific Activity Modifications

- **Avoid** activities that involve direct pressure or impact to the elbow (e.g., weightlifting, leaning on hard surfaces, contact sports).
- **Modify sports** (e.g., tennis, golf) by using proper form and padding to reduce stress on the elbow.
- **For hobbies like gardening, painting, or playing instruments,** use elbow support and take breaks.
- Gradually reintroduce activities as swelling and pain improve.

Recommended Supplements

- **Turmeric (500 mg twice daily)** - Helps reduce inflammation.
- **Omega-3 fatty acids (1000 mg daily)** - Supports joint health and reduces swelling.
- **Vitamin C (500 mg daily)** - Aids tissue healing.
- **Bromelain (500 mg daily)** - Anti-inflammatory enzyme that may help with swelling.

Recommended Nutrition and Hydration

Diet Recommendations:

- **Anti-inflammatory foods:** Leafy greens, berries, turmeric, nuts, and fatty fish (salmon).
- **Collagen-boosting foods:** Bone broth, citrus fruits, and bell peppers to support soft

tissue healing.

- **Avoid excessive processed foods and sugar**, which can worsen inflammation.

Hydration Tips:

- **Drink at least 2-3 liters of water daily** to maintain tissue hydration.
- **Limit alcohol and caffeine**, which can increase inflammation and slow recovery.

Home Exercise Prescription

Perform **2-3 times daily** to reduce stiffness and improve mobility:

1. **Elbow Range of Motion (Flexion & Extension)**
 - Slowly bend and straighten your elbow **10-15 reps**.
2. **Wrist Flexor & Extensor Stretch**
 - Hold the wrist in a gentle stretch forward and backward for **20-30 seconds, 3 times each direction**.
3. **Isometric Triceps Activation (if pain allows)**
 - Gently press the back of your hand against a surface without moving the elbow. Hold for **5 seconds, 10 reps**.
4. **Soft Tissue Massage**
 - Gently massage around the elbow to improve circulation (avoid excessive pressure on the bursa).

Avoid direct pressure on the elbow or weight-bearing activities until symptoms improve.

Helpful Books

1. "Arthritis: What Exercises Work" - Dava Sobel & Arthur C. Klein
2. "Framework for the Shoulder: A Practical Guide to Preventing Injury and Returning to Activity" - Nicholas A. Dinubile, MD

Click here for more orthopedic patient information.

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