

Elbow Strain

Explanation of Diagnosis

An **elbow strain** occurs when the **muscles or tendons** around the elbow joint are overstretched or torn due to excessive force, overuse, or sudden movement. This can lead to **pain, swelling, weakness, and difficulty bending or straightening the arm**. Mild strains heal with rest and therapy, while severe cases may require medical intervention.

Specific Work Modifications

- **Avoid** repetitive lifting, gripping, or forceful pushing/pulling.
- **Modify workstation setup** to reduce strain (ergonomic tools, proper chair/desk height).
- **Use a brace or compression sleeve** if support is needed.
- **Take frequent breaks** to stretch and avoid prolonged strain.
- **Avoid sudden or forceful elbow movements** until pain subsides.

Specific Activity Modifications

- **Avoid** activities requiring strong grip strength, throwing, or weight-bearing through the arm (e.g., tennis, golf, lifting weights).
- **Modify** sports or hobbies by using lighter equipment and reducing repetitive movements.
- **Use an elbow brace** for support during mild activities.
- Gradually **return to activities** with light resistance and proper warm-ups.

Recommended Supplements

- **Collagen peptides (10 g daily)** - Supports tendon and muscle healing.
- **Vitamin C (500 mg daily)** - Aids tissue repair.
- **Magnesium (300-400 mg daily)** - Helps muscle relaxation and recovery.
- **Turmeric (500 mg twice daily)** - Reduces inflammation and pain.

Recommended Nutrition and Hydration

Diet Recommendations:

- **Anti-inflammatory foods:** Leafy greens, berries, nuts, and fatty fish (salmon).
- **Protein-rich foods:** Chicken, eggs, lentils, and dairy to support muscle repair.
- **Collagen-boosting foods:** Bone broth, citrus fruits, and bell peppers.
- **Avoid processed foods and excessive sugar**, which can slow healing.

Hydration Tips:

- **Drink at least 2-3 liters of water daily** to maintain muscle and tendon hydration.
- **Limit caffeine and alcohol**, which can dehydrate tissues and slow healing.

Home Exercise Prescription

Perform **2-3 times daily** to improve mobility and promote healing:

1. Elbow Range of Motion (Flexion & Extension)

- Slowly bend and straighten your elbow.
- **10-15 reps, 2-3 times daily.**

2. Forearm Supination/Pronation Exercise

- Rotate the palm up and down while keeping the elbow bent at 90°.
- **10 reps, 2-3 times daily.**

3. Wrist Flexor & Extensor Stretch

- Hold the wrist in a gentle stretch forward and backward for **20-30 seconds, 3 times each direction.**

4. Isometric Elbow Hold

- Gently press your hand against a wall without moving the arm.
- **Hold for 5 seconds, 10 reps.**

5. Grip Strength Exercise (if pain-free)

- Squeeze a soft stress ball **10 reps, 2 times daily.**

Avoid heavy resistance or high-impact movements until fully recovered.

Helpful Books

1. *"The Athlete's Shoulder"* - James R. Andrews, MD
2. *"Rebuilding Milo: The Lifter's Guide to Fixing Common Injuries and Building a Strong Foundation"* - Aaron Horschig

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