

Triceps Tendonitis

Explanation of Diagnosis

Triceps tendonitis is **inflammation of the triceps tendon**, which connects the **triceps muscle** to the **olecranon (bony tip of the elbow)**. It is usually caused by **overuse, repetitive pushing or pressing motions, or excessive strain from weightlifting or sports**. Symptoms include **pain at the back of the elbow, tenderness, swelling, and weakness** when extending the arm.

Specific Work Modifications

- **Avoid repetitive pushing, pressing, or overhead lifting** (e.g., lifting heavy objects, using tools, or forceful pushing).
- **Modify workstation setup** to reduce strain (ergonomic tools, proper desk height, wrist/elbow supports).
- **Take frequent breaks** to stretch and prevent overuse.
- **Use a brace or compression sleeve** to support the elbow if needed.
- **Avoid resting the elbow on hard surfaces** for prolonged periods.

Specific Activity Modifications

- **Avoid** activities requiring strong triceps engagement, such as **push-ups, bench presses, dips, throwing sports, and tennis serves**.
- **Modify workouts** by reducing **overhead movements and heavy pressing exercises**.
- **Use lighter weights and higher repetitions** when returning to strength training.
- **Gradually reintroduce sports** while maintaining proper technique and warm-ups.

Recommended Supplements

- **Collagen peptides (10 g daily)** - Supports tendon healing.
- **Vitamin C (500 mg daily)** - Aids collagen synthesis for tendon repair.
- **Magnesium (300-400 mg daily)** - Helps muscle relaxation and recovery.
- **Turmeric (500 mg twice daily)** - Natural anti-inflammatory.
- **Omega-3 fatty acids (1000 mg daily)** - Reduces inflammation and stiffness.

Recommended Nutrition and Hydration

Diet Recommendations:

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

- **Protein-rich foods:** Chicken, eggs, lentils, and dairy to support muscle and tendon repair.
- **Limit processed foods and excess sugar,** which can worsen inflammation.

Hydration Tips:

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

Home Exercise Prescription

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

1. Triceps Stretch

- Raise your affected arm overhead and bend the elbow so your hand reaches toward your upper back.
- Use the opposite hand to gently push the elbow for a deeper stretch.
- **Hold for 20-30 seconds, repeat 3 times.**

2. Elbow Extension Stretch

- Fully straighten your arm and hold the position to gently stretch the triceps.
- **Hold for 20-30 seconds, repeat 3 times.**

3. Eccentric Triceps Strengthening (once pain improves)

- Hold a **light dumbbell (1-3 lbs)** and perform slow triceps extensions, lowering over **3-5 seconds**.
- **10 reps, 2-3 times daily.**

4. Isometric Elbow Hold

- Press the back of your hand against a surface without moving the elbow.
- **Hold for 5 seconds, 10 reps.**

5. Forearm Supination/Pronation Exercise

- Hold a **light weight** (or a hammer) with the elbow bent at 90°.
- Rotate the palm **up and down slowly**.
- **10 reps, 2-3 times daily.**

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

Helpful Books

1. "Framework for the Shoulder: A Practical Guide to Preventing Injury and Returning to Activity" - Nicholas A. Dinubile, 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.