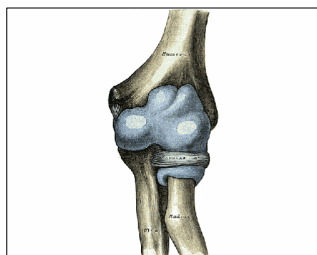


Golden Hills

Orthopedic and Sports Physical Therapy

october 2006

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Our Mission...

To further the prevention, diagnosis and treatment of movement dysfunction in order to enhance the physical health and functional abilities of our patients.

To maximize the patient's potential for regaining full physical health by providing rehabilitation through the use of advancements in physical therapy techniques and state-of-the-art equipment.

To establish a self-management program for the patient through education and a personalized home exercise program for each individual to enable the patient to maintain his or her physical health at home and at work.

Physical Therapy for Elbow Injuries

Golden Hills specializes in treating elbow injuries of all kinds. Call us for more information!

(408) 274-0888

Preventing and Treating Injuries to the Elbow

Elbow pain is an extremely common complaint, and there are many causes that lead patients to seek medical and physical therapy treatment. Repetitive work strain, acute trauma, overuse and misuse of the joint, arthritis, and everyday wear and tear all can contribute to patient complaints, and may often cause significant pain, short-term loss of limb function and long-term disability. At

Golden Hills, our mission is to work with our community of referring physicians both to prevent elbow injuries in patients through proper exercise and training and to effectively rehabilitate injuries once they occur.

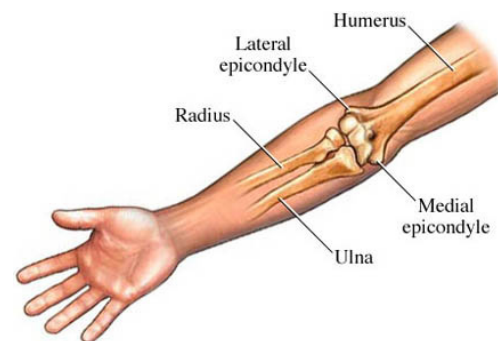
Based on the insights and experience of Saad Shaban, PT, founder and owner of Golden Hills, this 2-issue series (October and November) will help you respond to injuries with appropriate evaluation and treatment, and appreciate the important role physical therapy plays in helping patients achieve their recovery goals.

Anatomy and Function of the Elbow

The elbow joint is the center of articulation between the humerus, the bone of the upper arm, and the radius and ulna of the forearm. It is an important joint for range of motion and mobility of the upper extremities. As compared to the wrist and shoulder, the elbow provides

less weight bearing activity.

Two main movements are possible at the elbow. The hinge-like bending and straightening of the elbow (flexion and extension) happens at the articulation between the humerus and the ulna. The complex action of turning the forearm over (pronation or supination) happens at the articulation between the radius and the ulna (this movement also occurs at the wrist joint).



Two ligaments are present in the elbow joint, the ulnar collateral ligament and the radial collateral ligament. These ligaments provide strength and support to the joint as do the surrounding muscles. In fact, the elbow's unique construction makes it one of the most stable joints in the body.

A small deficiency in the elaborate stability and controlling mechanisms of the elbow can have a significant and cumulative effect on elbow function.

Preventing and Treating Elbow Injuries (Continued)

Elbow Injury Overview

While any number of physical activities can cause elbow injuries, they occur most commonly during:

- Sports or recreational activities
- Work-related tasks
- Work or projects around the home
- Slips and falls

In children, the risk for injury is higher in sports such as baseball (throwing), wrestling, football and soccer, or high-speed sports such as biking, in-line skating, skiing, snowboarding and skateboarding.

Elbows, forearms, wrists, hands and fingers are the most affected areas, both from acute trauma and from overuse injuries. Any injury in a child or adolescent that occurs near a joint may injure the growing end (growth plate) of long bones and needs to be evaluated.

Older adults have a higher risk for injuries and fractures because they lose muscle mass and bone strength (osteoporosis) as they age. In addition, they also have more problems with vision and balance, which increase their risk for accidental injury.

Some of the most common elbow injury conditions leading to patient complaints include:

- **Elbow Dislocation**
- **Elbow Fracture**
- **Biceps Tendon Rupture**
- **Tendonitis**
 - **Lateral Epicondylitis (Tennis Elbow)**

- **Medial Epicondylitis (Golfer's Elbow)**
- **Biceps Tenodinitis**
- **Olecranon Bursitis**
- **Cubital Tunnel Syndrome**
- **Radial Tunnel Syndrome**
- **Arthritis**

Elbow Injury Treatment

The treatment of elbow pain depends entirely on:

- The location, type and severity of the injury
- The age, physical health and lifestyle of the patient
- How long ago the injury occurred.

In addition to physical therapy, which plays a critical role in any patient care plan, other forms of treatment may include:

- Rest
- Application of ice and heat
- Stretching
- NSAIDs
- Cortisone injections
- In some cases, surgery

In next month's issue, we will delve into more detail about each of the elbow injury conditions listed above and provide helpful insights into Golden Hills' approach to improving patient recovery through physical therapy.

Patient Tips

Preventing Elbow Injuries

- Warm up slowly. Perform regular stretching and strengthening exercises (given to you by your physical therapist) before, during and after exercise, sports or recreational activities.
- Wear protective and/or supportive gear during exercise, sports or recreational activities.
- Don't carry objects that are too heavy.
- Avoid overusing your arm through repeated movements.
- Reduce how much time you spend performing any repetitive activity that causes you pain.
- Use ice or ibuprofen after an activity to prevent swelling and pain.
- If workplace activities are causing pain or soreness, call your human resources department for information on alternative ways of doing your job or to discuss equipment modifications.
- Prevent falls by removing obstacles in and around walking paths.
- Eat a nutritious diet that includes enough calcium and vitamin D, which helps your body absorb calcium.