

Orthopaedic Connection

Golf Injuries - Treatment

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Transforming patient information into patient understanding.

Golf is a sport that has hit its stride and is becoming increasingly popular. It is enjoyed by men and women (and children too) from all walks of life. It is one of the few sports that can be enjoyed by some people even into advanced age. It gets you outside unless you are one who wants to do those indoor virtual golf experiences.

It is humbling because it is so difficult to play consistently well. I greatly admire those who do, especially if they don't make their living at it.

I pointed out last week that I find that the three major areas golfers have trouble are - the lower back, the shoulder and the elbow. Those are the big three not necessarily in order.

The Back

It can be a problem in golfers for three reasons.

- Not in good shape to begin with (muscles, weight, etc.)
- Poor biomechanics: incorrect swing increasing stress
- Wear and tear changes in the lower back waiting to be aggravated by the first two factors.

Prevention, flexibility and strengthening exercises are not that standardized, but there are some basics. It is not possible in the space we have to teach this here. I believe that all of the Physical Therapy places I deal with would, at no charge, hand you a printed program you could benefit from doing.

If prevention exercises didn't work and pain continues, take a week off from golf, take Advil, use heat and ice and do the stretches if able to do them without too much discomfort. Then resume play.

If it persists someone such as myself or another practitioner needs to take a look and prescribe treatment.

The Shoulder

I won't list all the causes of potential trouble. Prevention can be as simple as keeping the shoulder stretched out. Walk your arm up a wall as far as you can by facing the wall. Hold ten seconds, do 3- 5 times

(reps). Hold your hand behind your back at your waist for 30 seconds. Do often through the day. Lastly, get some large rubber bands, Therabands, to pull for resistance exercises.

If prevention didn't help and pain persists have me or someone else check it for you.

The Elbow

Pain is typically on the inner side of the elbow and caused by inflammation. Poor swing mechanics cause this and it is aggravated by age and frequency of play.

If any concern about stiffness in the elbow exists stretching is necessary. Some golfers wear a counter force, velcro-elastic brace around the forearm just below the elbow. This can relieve a lot of stress on the elbow.

If pain occurs, heat, ice, Advil, Theragesic rub and decreased golf for a week hopefully will help. If not you need to see me or someone else.

Conclusion

It is a great sport. Hopefully I haven't spooked you out too much talking about potential problems. Prevention is best, but hard to discipline yourself to do. Believe me I know. Help is available if needed.

Check out our office teaching website sometime. It has tons of information about musculoskeletal problems and injuries. Go to www.orthopodsurgeon.com, which takes you to Your Orthopaedic Connection.

As always our goal is simple - To help people return to more pain free, functional lives.

Good health. Good life. All the best to you.

Be well.

Dr. Haverbush