

# Acupuncture

## Successfully Treats Tennis & Golfer's Elbow

By Toni Eatros, MS, Dipl Ac, AP

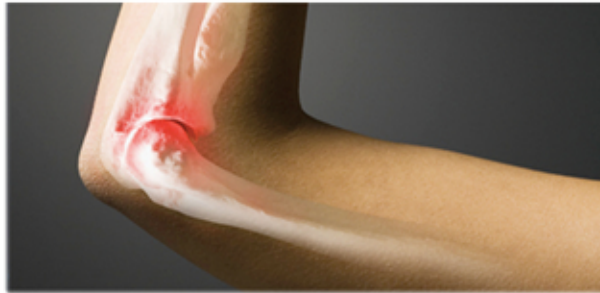
### What is Tennis & Golfer's Elbow?

If you are experiencing **pain in the elbow or forearm** or if your golf or tennis game is suffering, I have good news for you. Acupuncture can alleviate the pain you are experiencing so you can get back to the activities that you enjoy.

Many people suffer from severe pain in the elbow and forearm. Tennis elbow, also known as lateral epicondylitis, is pain at the lateral side of the elbow. When the arm is laid across the chest, like you are doing the pledge of allegiance, the lateral epicondyle is the little bony protuberance at the elbow that is facing the sky. If you play a lot of tennis, this area can become very sore, and usually makes playing tennis extremely painful and difficult.

Golfer's elbow, also known as medial epicondylitis, is pain at the medial side of the elbow. When the arm is laid across the chest, like you are doing the pledge of allegiance, the medial epicondyle is the little bony protuberance at the elbow that is touching your abdomen. If you play a lot of golf, this area can become very sore, usually making playing golf extremely painful and difficult.

Many of my patients are very discouraged when they start to develop pain in either of these areas. They usually come to me saying that their golf or tennis games are suffering and that their form is off. The pain often causes these people to decrease the frequency of play or cut the games short. This can be the beginning of a downward spiral of physical decline. These once very active people, stop being active due to the pain they are experiencing. When activity decreases, many of these people become sedentary, which leads to physical decline in other areas of their body. Don't let this happen to you!



### How Does Acupuncture Help?

Even if you have tried acupuncture before and did not get the results you wanted, I encourage you to try it again. Zang-Fu diagnosis is the type of diagnosis that is taught in American acupuncture schools. Most acupuncturists utilize this diagnostic method to diagnose and treat their patients. Some patients improve completely, some get a significant reduction in pain, and others get only a small amount of pain relief. This type of diagnosis strategy works great for Chinese Herbs, but for acupuncture the results are inconsistent.

Until recently, this was the type of acupuncture diagnosis that I used in my practice. I was frustrated because the outcome between patients was not consistent. I am happy to report that I have learned a new type of diagnosis and treatment strategy that is getting fantastic results when it comes to pain relief. Most patients get significant reduction of pain within minutes of the insertion of the acupuncture needles.

This diagnosis method is called meridian theory. Meridian diagnosis and treatment is the most effective acupuncture method. It is not taught in the acupuncture schools, however, so most acupuncturists do not use this method. That is why I encourage you to try acupuncture again if you didn't get relief the first time and if you are still experiencing elbow and forearm pain.

### What Kind Of Acupuncture Is Used?

I use the mirroring and imaging formats to select the appropriate points. To treat the elbow, I will put the acupuncture needles into the opposite knee. I use acupressure to identify tender areas on the corresponding areas of your opposite shin and lower leg. The tender areas are where I put the needles. This approach makes each treatment unique, it is rare that exactly the same points are used from treatment to treatment.

The needles are stimulated periodically over the course of about 45 minutes. Soft lighting and music plays so you become very relaxed during the course of the treatment. Depending on the exact circumstances of your pain, stretching, massage, moxibustion or electro-acupuncture may be used in addition to the acupuncture. Instructions about home self-treatment will be given as well.

Treatment results vary depending on the length of time the pain has been present, your overall health, and your ability to rest the arm between treatments. Most patients see a dramatic reduction in pain within the first 3 treatments. If the pain is chronic and if you continue to overuse the arm between treatments, then progress is usually a bit slower. I recommend 6-12 treatments total in most cases. Results are the best if you can come 3 times per week for the first two weeks, then as needed for maintenance. If you make an effort to rest the arm and perform the suggested home treatment, results can be fast and long lasting so you can resume your pursuit of the activities you enjoy. I am also told that golf and tennis games dramatically improve after acupuncture, form is better and people are able to hit the ball much further.

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