

## I'm telling ya folks, tennis elbow hurts like the toot.....



### PICKLEBALL IN THE VILLAGES with George Brewer

I have a lot of Villagers suggest I use this column to write about specific subjects that are important to them. Tennis elbow is the most suggested but I have avoided that subject because I had never experienced the problem, done any research or understood the pain that accompanies this condition. Not anymore. I'm telling ya folks, tennis elbow hurts like the toot.

First, to avoid going to a doctor I tried every "self healing" idea anyone was willing to share with me. My arm was almost medium-rare from all the heating pad time I put it thru. I wrapped myself up from elbow to wrist with spandex until I cut off all circulation in my arm. When my arm turned gray that scared the "tar" out of me so I took all that stuff off. I took every "over the counter" pill I could find and all I accomplished was my stomach hurt me more than my elbow. I put on so much salve, ointment, gel and cream that when I went to bed every night I had to hold on to the covers to keep from sliding off.

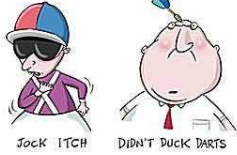
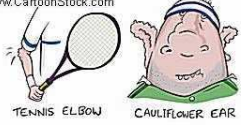
I finally started reading articles on the Internet and books friends offered me. The first web site I visited suggested I didn't have tennis elbow but I probably had Bursitis. That cheered me up. Every article steered me toward going to see a doctor. That's like asking a man to stop and get directions when we're lost. We don't do those things until we've exhausted every other possibility.

Then I read "Scientific Conditioning Program for Tennis" by Joseph Zohar (MA/RPT - whatever the heck that is) and he said, "Common injuries, such as tennis elbow, are caused by strains that exceed the tolerance of the arm muscles. Since muscles are the primary defence against external forces conditioning of the muscles is the key factor in preventing tennis elbow." O.K., so conditioning my arm will help prevent tennis elbow but what about someone who is already hurting? How do I get relief? I wasn't gonna like what I had to do.

The most effective treatment for tennis elbow is to rest the arm until the pain disappears. Then massage the arm to relieve stress and tension in the muscles and exercise to strengthen the area to prevent re-injury. If you don't strengthen your arm, 95% of the time the problem is going to come back. Try these ideas:

- Lift objects with the palm facing your body.
- Try strengthening exercises with hand weights. With your elbow cocked and your palm down, repeatedly bend your wrist. Stop if you feel any pain.

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Sporting maladies

- Stretch relevant muscles before beginning Pickleball. Grasp the top part of your fingers and gently but firmly pull them back toward your body. Keep your arm fully extended and your palm facing outward.
- Try strapping a band around your forearm just below your elbow. Be aware such bands can cut off circulation and actually impede healing.

I bought a FUTURO Adjustable Elbow Support (\$8.99) from drugstore.com and along with the modest exercise mentioned above I have been pain free for 3 months and I no longer have to wear the Support.

C U on D Courts.....George Brewer