

*The most common sites of tendinitis are the shoulder, arms, hip, hamstrings, and the Achilles tendon.*

*~ The Merck Manual  
16th Edition*

## Tendinitis

Tendinitis can affect everyone from tennis players and golfers to business people and office workers. **Characterized by painful scarring and inflammation of muscle tendons, tendinitis ("itis" = inflammation) inhibits proper muscle function.**

Muscles form a part of our loco-motor system of the body. They serve to provide movement, stability, and protection of our bony skeleton and internal organs. The tendon part of the muscle connects to the bone itself, and is different from muscle fibers because tendons do not contract and have a limited blood supply. Through **repeated micro-trauma**, as can be seen in the sport of tennis (in the lateral forearm), tendons can develop tiny scars. In more extreme cases connective tissue calcification.

According to the American Physical Therapy Association, the expected duration of massage therapy needed to resolve tendinitis would take 8-16 weeks, with a total number of visits between 6 and 24.



*Moderate pressure friction massage is given over the "supraspinatus" muscle of the shoulder. The client sits comfortably on a chair, and the arm is placed in a neutral position. The MT performs the friction massage in a crosswise direction to the normal orientation of the muscle tendon for 2-5 minutes.*

Tendinitis is sometimes called a **repetitive strain injury** ("rsi") because the scarring and fibrous bands of tissue that develop are commonly **caused by repetition of poor posture/body mechanics, or simply because the muscle tendon cannot adapt to forces placed upon it.** Unless you've suddenly whacked your tendon, tendinitis usually occurs gradually through repeated trauma to the muscle tendon. A thorough assessment and interview with your Massage Therapist will help form the basis for what may be causing your tendinitis.

*Cont'd on reverse side...*

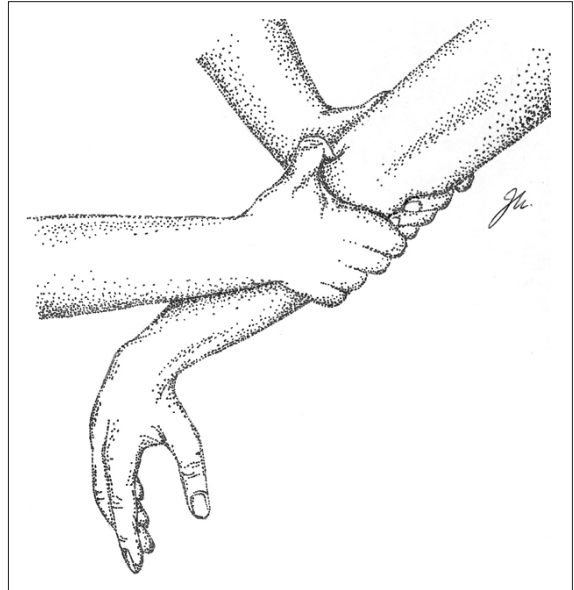
## ***Tendinitis (Cont'd)***

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### **Tennis Elbow (aka "lateral epicondylitis")**

Tennis elbow is basically tendinitis/inflammation in the extensor muscle of the forearm. Just as in the example of the shoulder muscle example on the first page of this newsletter, the same friction massage technique is used on the forearm muscle tendon of tennis elbow.

*See diagram -->*



**Talk to your Massage Therapist about which self-care techniques are appropriate for your condition.** For example, icing a swollen and painful tendon after participating in unaccustomed or strenuous exercise acts to normalize the body's inflammation response, thereby relieving pain.

### **Massage Therapy and Tendinitis**

**Massage therapy demonstrates good results in the effective treatment of acute and chronic forms of tendinitis.** Drawing from an extensive background in clinical anatomy and hands-on skills, your MT will assess your condition to gather information about possible causes and precipitating factors. Regular, short-duration visits are essential in order to maximize recovery time. Speak with your MT for details.

**Hydrotherapy is commonly used as an adjunct modality to massage.** In acute cases, where inflammation is present and your tendon is "flared-up", ice may be applied as a natural pain reliever for 10-minutes-on and 10-minutes-off. After the major inflammatory processes wind down, contrast hydrotherapy is used to improve circulation to the muscle tendon and injury site. Finally, after 3-weeks or so, heat is generally used.

**The massage technique of choice for tendinitis is called transverse friction massage, followed by ice.** Using moderate to deep pressure, the MT applies a crosswise force to the affected tendon for 2-5 minutes. The sensation is fairly painful and numbing, however, your MT will keep in close communication with you to stay within your pain tolerance. The goal is to break down and mobilize those naughty bands of scar-like tissue, improve the overall function of the muscle/tendon, and to restore muscle length and strength. Another important aim is to ensure that the joints above and below the injury site (where applicable) stay relaxed and mobile.

**For appointment bookings or more information, please call: (905) 897-8889**