



Hand, Wrist or Elbow Pain?

TIPS TO HELP YOU GET BACK ON THE GOLF COURSE QUICKLY

Dr. Zelouf welcomes new patients in Malvern, King of Prussia and Center City Philadelphia offices.



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As an avid golfer, I've had my share of golf injuries, as well as general aches and pains. I've had golfer's elbow, painful shoulder bursitis and chronic low back pain from arthritis, hitting too many balls on the range, and just plain old wear and tear. Most golfers have had their share of age – and golf – related issues as well, but we play through it because we love the game. I rarely tell my patients to put the clubs down, since I can't imagine any extended period of time without my sticks. As an orthopedic hand surgeon with a good understanding of body mechanics, I'd like to share a few thoughts to help you through a few common wrist and elbow issues you may

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be having, and to let you know when you may need to see an expert.

The golf swing is tough on the body, and can take its toll on the back, elbows, and wrists. Golf injuries can be related to pure repetition, a single bad shot (hitting a shot out of deep rough) or hitting a root unexpectedly (take a drop next time). The most common golf related injuries and conditions that I

treat are mostly at the elbow and wrist. Golfer's elbow, or medial epicondylitis, is a breakdown or degeneration of the origin of the flexor pronator tendon, which

originates from the inside of the elbow. It is not truly an inflammatory problem, but rather a degenerative tendon problem. It is more common in people over the age of 40. The best way to avoid getting it is to avoid hitting balls from a firm mat, which is how it started in my case. Once it becomes an issue, it can last a long time and can make each impact painful. For me, stretching my back and my elbow daily has been very helpful, along with shallowing out my swing, and dumping my 130 – gram steel shafts for a 95 – gram graphite steel composite, which has been great for absorbing impact but allows for consistency that's tough to find in a pure graphite shaft. In some golfers, an injection is necessary, but therapy and stretching can often eliminate the need

for cortisone. Surgery is typically a last resort, as the recovery period is 4-6 months.

Wrist injuries are common as well, and plenty of tour pros have missed extended time because of wrist injuries. The list includes Jim Furyk, Brooks Koepka and Justin Thomas, along with many others. Common wrist problems include tendinitis, ligament tears and hamate hook fractures that are often undiagnosed for months. Through a combination of physiotherapy, rest and splinting, most wrist pain can be treated successfully without surgery. If the pain doesn't resolve after taking a week or two off, I recommend you see an expert for an evaluation. And always remember you can still practice your putting, even one handed, which is one of my favorite drills.



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Call **610-768-5959** to schedule an appointment or visit **Hand2ShoulderCenter.com** to learn more about Dr. Zelouf and Philadelphia Hand to Shoulder Center.