

WHY WRISTWAND™ WORKS

How the WristWand™ Exercise Works By Dr. Margaret Heller, DC

The WristWand™, when used properly as indicated in the instructions, stretches the areas commonly under stress with routine use of the computer keyboard. These are the medial tendons and ligaments of the wrist (the 5th finger side). While gripping the WristWand™ and internally rotating the forearms, a deep stretch is obtained by passively deviating the wrist to the radial or thumb side of the arm.

The connective tissues that are stretched include:

- the common tendon for the flexor carpi ulnaris muscle
- the abductor digiti minimi muscle
- the flexor digiti minimi muscle
- the opponens digiti minimi muscle

The ligaments involved are the medial wrist ligaments that prevent excessive range of motion between the ulna (a long bone of the forearm) and the pisiform (a small irregular bone of the hand).

Regular stretching promotes circulation which improves the blood flow to the working tissues and encourages tissue repair. It reduces muscle tension, increases range of motion and helps to prevent injury. Stretching also requires a change in position, not only in the wrists, but in the arms, back and neck as well, relieving the stress of previously held postures.

Source: Stretching. Bob Anderson. Shelter Publications, Inc. Bolinas, California. 22nd Printing)

WristWand™ and Elbow Injuries

Before you attack the tennis courts, golf courses and other sports venues, give your hard-working arm joints the respect and attention they deserve.

Most people, including tennis players, baseball players and golfers have poor stretching and warm up habits before beginning their game. That is probably why they have common overuse syndromes named after them such as Tennis Elbow and Golfers Elbow. Often people who claim these maladies have never played the game!

Tennis Elbow and Golfers Elbow are painful inflammatory conditions that develop because of tearing, or irritation due to repetitive stress or sudden intense injury to the flexor or extensor muscles of the forearm. It can also be caused by repetitive or violent rotation of the wrist while playing tennis, golf, from playing piano or typing at a keyboard etc. Regardless, the condition can be very painful and healing can take months, years or it

may never heal 100%.

Orthopedic specialists at UT Southwestern Medical Center at Dallas recommend you maintain the strength and flexibility in your upper and lower arms to avoid elbow injuries. Proper warm-up and stretching prior to and while playing tennis and golf are important, as well as proper technique while playing your game or sitting at your computer.

At the first sign of elbow pain the treatment is rest. Over the counter anti-inflammatory medications and analgesics can be helpful if you do not return to the offending activity until the pain is at least 95% gone. Deep massage with ice is also indicated to reduce inflammation. Elbow straps, sold in sporting-goods stores have been proven to aggravate other problems and are not recommended at this time. After a few days of rest and icing procedures passive range of motion and stretching with a WristWand should commence to improve joint mobility and increase the strength of the tendons and ligaments. Mobility should be improved first and then active exercises, or exercises done with weights, can be attempted after the pain has disappeared with stretching and passive range of motion.