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Elbow Strengthening Exercises

The following elbow strengthening exercises are designed to improve strength of the muscles of the elbow. You should discuss the suitability of these exercises with your physiotherapist prior to beginning them. Generally, they should only be performed provided they do not cause or increase pain.

Begin with the basic elbow strengthening exercises. Once these are too easy, they can be replaced with the intermediate elbow strengthening exercises. As your strength improves, the advanced exercises can be added to the intermediate program.

Elbow Strengthening – Basic Exercises

To begin with, the following basic elbow strengthening exercises should be performed approximately 10 times, 3 times daily. As your elbow strength improves, the exercises can be progressed by gradually increasing the repetitions and strength of contraction provided they do not cause or increase pain.

Static Biceps

Begin this exercise with your elbow at your side and bent to 90 degrees, palm up as demonstrated (figure 1). Push up against your other hand tightening your biceps. Hold for 5 seconds and repeat 10 times as hard as possible without pain.

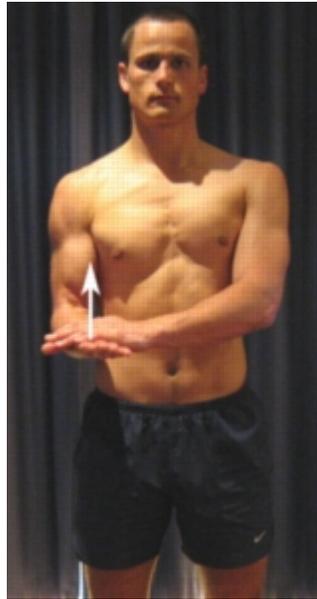


Figure 1 – Static Biceps (right arm)

Static Triceps

Begin this exercise with your elbow at your side and bent to 90 degrees. Your palm should be facing inwards with your hand in a fist as demonstrated (figure 2). Push down against your other hand tightening the muscles at the back of your arm (triceps). Hold for 5 seconds and repeat 10 times as hard as possible without pain.

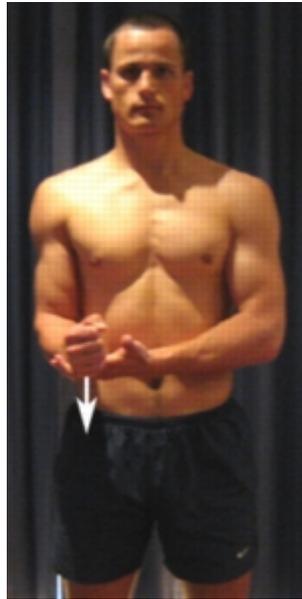


Figure 2 – Static Triceps (right arm)

Elbow Strengthening – Intermediate Exercises

The following intermediate elbow strengthening exercises should generally be performed 1 - 3 times per week provided they do not cause or increase pain. Ideally they should not be performed on consecutive days, to allow muscle recovery. As your elbow strength improves, the exercises can be progressed by gradually increasing the repetitions, number of sets or resistance provided they do not cause or increase pain.

Resistance Band Supination

Begin this exercise with a resistance band around your hand as demonstrated (figure 3). Your elbow should be at your side and bent to 90 degrees. Slowly rotate your forearm against the resistance band so your palm faces up. Perform 3 sets of 10 repetitions as far as possible and comfortable without pain.



Figure 3 – Resistance Band Supination (right arm)

Resistance Band Pronation

Begin this exercise with a resistance band around your hand as demonstrated (figure 4). Your elbow should be at your side and bent to 90 degrees. Slowly rotate your forearm against the resistance band so your palm faces down. Perform 3 sets of 10 repetitions as far as possible and comfortable without pain.



Figure 4 – Resistance Band Pronation (right arm)