

Triceps Tendinopathy

Triceps tendinopathy is a type of condition that is characterized by damage to the triceps tendon that causes pain to radiate into the back part of the elbow. Triceps tendinopathy often occurs due to a repeated or prolonged amount of activities placing strain on the muscle. Most of the time, this condition occurs from repetitive pushing activities or having to straighten the elbow against some form of resistance, such as dips or push-ups. On occasion, the condition can occur all of a sudden due to a high amount of force going through the triceps beyond what it is normally capable of withstanding on its own. Heavy weightlifting in a gym is one of the most common places where this can occur.

Most often triceps tendinopathy will occur on the insertion at the elbow (rather than at the shoulder).

Triceps Tendinopathy Anatomy

The triceps (known as the triceps brachii) is a three-headed muscle. It sits in the upper arm. The muscle works closely with the biceps acting in an opposite manner. So as the biceps contracts the elbow will flex, as the triceps contracts the elbow will straighten.

The triceps also has some influence on shoulder mobility, helping to extend the shoulder backwards.

How to Treat Triceps Tendinopathy:

1. Ice

Apply ice to the affected area for 5-10 minutes at a time three to five times per day to help relieve pain and inflammation. Make sure to wrap the ice in a thin towel to prevent an ice burn from occurring on your skin.

2. Anti-Inflammatory Medication

Taking an anti-inflammatory medication can help to improve some of the pain and swelling in the tendon. As the swelling diminishes, you will be able to move the arm around more without having as much pain. Use only short-term.

3. Therapy

As triceps tendinopathy can become chronic, it is important to see a therapist to correct the problem early. Massage is one of the primary methods of treatment. Other forms of therapy include acupuncture, ultrasound, LASER, interferential, and shockwave. They all help to stimulate blood flow to the area and encourage healing.

4. Modification of Activities

Modifying your activities is one of the best things you can do to help the tendon heal. Anything that causes more pain should be avoided to prevent further injuries from occurring.

Tips:

- If you are going to participate in any sporting activities, make sure you take the time to warm-up properly before beginning.
- When strength training, make sure to use proper form and equipment to alleviate unnecessary injuries.
- Take rest days regularly following weight training.
- If you have a history of upper back and neck injuries, consult your therapist incase this is influencing the problem.
- Discuss with your RMP therapist about a stretching or strengthening plan.

