

Tennis injury prevention

Many tennis injuries can be prevented by increasing the level of awareness and knowledge among players, parents and coaches. Additional ways to prevent tennis injuries include selecting the right equipment, stretching before and after playing, good nutrition and following a conditioning/strengthening program.

What are common tennis injuries?

- Rotator cuff tendonitis and shoulder impingement
- Tennis elbow (lateral epicondylitis)
- Wrist sprains
- Back pain
- Knee pain (patellofemoral pain)
- Calf and Achilles tendon injuries
- Ankle and knee sprains
- Tennis toe

How can I prevent tennis injuries?

- Have a good warm-up program. This prepares your body for tennis. It should be a total body program. Warm-ups should use moving stretches (dynamic stretches) and include arm, leg and back muscles.
- Have a good strengthening program. Strengthen upper and lower body muscles. Use good form to prevent overuse injuries.
- Do drills that challenge your balance and body control.
- Include jumping and agility drills. These work on burst-like movements (plyometrics).
- Wear well-fitted safety gear. This includes:
 - Shoes for tennis
 - Correctly sized racquet
 - Safety glasses or glass guards, if needed
- Drink plenty of water 30 minutes before games or practices. Drink both water and sports drinks during games and practices. Only drink sports drinks if practice or games are more than 90 minutes.



What can I do before the season starts?

Tennis matches can last from 30 minutes to 5 or more hours. Tennis players need a pre-season plan to help get their bodies ready. Start the program at least 6 to 8 weeks before the season starts. Pre-season plans include:

- Flexibility
- Strength
- Balance and coordination
- Endurance
- Agility
- Special tennis skills

How should I warm up?

It is important to warm up. A basic warm-up should take 15 to 25 minutes.

- Start with 5 minutes of light aerobic activity. This raises the heart rate and warms up muscles.
- Do 10 minutes of dynamic stretches. Stretch your arms, legs and back.
- Spend 5 minutes doing full-speed sprinting and jumping in different directions.
- Finish with 10 minutes of serving, ground strokes, volleys and overheads.
- At the end of a practice or round:
 - Spend time stretching your whole body.
 - Hold each stretch for at least 30 seconds.
 - Stretch for 10 to 15 minutes.

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