

Serving the local community since 2001

Back in Shape



Physiotherapy & Pilates



Helen's Mat Classes

Term dates: 2019 Term 4

Start: Monday 7 October
End: Monday 16 December

Alphington Bowls Club
Parkview Rd, Alphington

All ages and abilities classes

Mon: 12-1pm & 7-8pm
Wed: 5.30-6.30pm
Fri: 9.15-10.15am & 10.30-11.30am
Cost: Mon: 10-week term: \$230 or \$28/class casual
Wed: 10-week term: \$230 or \$28/class casual
Fri: 10-week term: \$230 or \$28/class casual

Fairfield Community Room
Station St, Fairfield

Over 50s class

Mon: 9.30-10.15am
Cost: 10-week term: \$120 or \$14/class casual

Limited mobility class

Mon: 10.30-11.15am
Cost: 10-week term: \$120 or \$14/class casual

PUBLIC HOLIDAY ALERT:
There will be no classes on
Melbourne Cup Day Eve
on Monday 4 November

Tim's Pilates

Call Tim for information on 0410 010818

These classes will run continuously without term breaks.

Alphington Bowls Club
Parkview Rd, Alphington

Mon: 6-7pm
Cost: \$120 for a block of 10 classes or \$15/class casual

Getting a grip on Tennis Elbow

If you have ever suffered a pain on the outside of your elbow, especially around the bony part, or had pain radiating down your forearm, the chances are that you have had—or perhaps still have—Tennis Elbow, or to give the condition its proper name, Lateral Epicondylitis.

Tennis elbow is classic example of a tendinopathy, which is the inflammation of tendons. Tendons are those structures that connect our muscles to our bones and they are loaded with pain-sensitive nerve endings to protect us from pulling a muscle off the bone through over stretching or by contracting a muscle too forcefully. You can think of them as the body's equivalent of a crumple zone in a car: the tendons get damaged in order to prevent the muscles and bones from suffering greater, more debilitating damage.

If we overwork a muscle, it will tighten and shorten and this puts additional torsion on the tendon. It is actually this torsion that fires up the pain-sensitive nerve endings that cause us pain. In more extreme cases, it is possible to cause microscopic tears in the tendon.

Tennis elbow can occur at any age, but it is most typical in the 40-50 year old age category. It can come on suddenly as a result of a single activity, or develop more gradually over time, often appearing a day or two after engaging in an unaccustomed endeavour.

Simply put, Tennis Elbow is an overuse injury of the muscles we use for cocking and extending the wrist. We use these muscles most when gripping something, like a tennis racquet for instance from which the condition gets its name. Other examples include tools or equipment that similarly require a secure grip, such as garden secateurs or heavy frying pans.

Tennis Elbow can be caused by too small a grip, especially if the object is heavy or unwieldy, from using a poor gripping technique, or simply through doing too much. Aggravating activities include vacuuming, sewing, knitting or computer use.

So if you suspect you have Tennis Elbow, what can you do about it?

First up, it is important to identify the condition and the activity that has caused it—or any activities that are continuing to aggravate the injury—so that these can be avoided.

Icing the site of the pain will help reduce inflammation. This can be achieved by using an icepack for 10 minutes at a time, or performing an ice massage for 1 minute at a



time.

Likewise, massaging Voltarin gel into the tender area of the elbow will also help reduce inflammation and pain.

Massaging the Wrist Extensor forearm muscles will help irradiate any trigger points or taut bands. You may need to consult your physio to ensure you are doing this correctly.

A Tennis Elbow brace can provide much relief from pain and discomfort. Taping can achieve the same result, but again you are probably best consulting your physio for this.

Once the condition has begun to settle down, isometric exercises—as taught by your physio—will help you strengthen your tendons. See picture above for an example of these.

However, you should be aware that elbow pain can sometimes be referred down from the neck, so if these measures do not calm the condition, the initial diagnosis may be wrong. Again, your physio will diagnose what the condition is and advise on the best course of remedial action.

And finally, before recommencing the aggravating activity, it would probably be a good idea to check that your technique is good in order to avoid a reoccurrence of the condition in the future.

Active Standing Exercises

Do you ever find yourself stationary on your feet: perhaps waiting in a shop queue, or even cleaning your teeth? Well if so, 'Active Upright Exercises' are designed to allow you to multi-task and do some exercises in otherwise dead time. So don't just stand there. Stand actively!



Tennis Elbow Stretch

If you are suffering from Tennis Elbow currently, have suffered from the condition in the past, or simply want to avoid Tennis Elbow in the future, this exercise will help. Please note, if you experience pain on the outside of your elbow as you perform this exercise, then you might currently have Tennis Elbow. If this is the case, you can still follow this routine, but I recommend that you stretch just short of pain. Also, if you think you might have Tennis Elbow, please refer to the additional advice in the main article. This exercise can actually be performed sitting or standing.

- Straighten your elbow and let your arm hang down by your side
- Turn your thumb in towards the body, allowing your whole arm to rotate in at the shoulder until your thumb points behind you
- Turn your palm up to face the ceiling in the "waiter's tip position"
- For a stronger stretch, move your whole arm in front of your body, so you can use your other hand to get a little more bend at the wrist. See the picture adjacent to ensure you are doing this correctly
- You should feel a stretch down the forearm
- Hold the stretch for 10 seconds
- Repeat three times



Morning maintenance

Fine-tuning your body for peak performance

Have you ever noticed that everything that is important to us needs to be looked after: home, garden, car, pets and children? Take your garden, for instance. You probably need to water, weed, feed, plant and prune the garden to keep it looking its best.

Well, our bodies are the same; they need regular maintenance to keep them in optimum condition. As we get older, our bodies require more regular upkeep and I believe there is a certain level of daily maintenance that we require.

We need to move our joints through their full range of motion, work all our muscles, challenge our balance and sharpen our coordination every single day.

The best way I have found to achieve this is to have a simple 5-to-15-minute exercise routine that you perform every morning. During the last term in Pilates, I shared my own personal routine with you. You are more than welcome to use this for yourselves, or feel free to modify it to your own requirements.

You will find that this morning maintenance routine will help wake up your body for the day. It will feel good, both physically and mentally, and it will help you tune into your body and notice if something is tighter today than it was yesterday.

As with any exercise routine, the more you do it, the easier it will become and the more you will notice gradual improvements in your performance.

And each morning you will start the day feeling warmed up, more balanced, more invigorated and better able to tackle the day ahead.

If you missed the exercise routine I shared with you last term, come along to my classes this term—or book a one-to-one session with me—and I'll be happy to help you get started with your own program to start the day.

