

# **GOLF – How to have a swinging good time!!**

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I am an enthusiastic golfer, unfortunately I am not a good golfer. I am one of those players that crave for those few perfect shots (out of 110) that keep me coming back for more. I also assume (and hope) that as I stand at the tee-box for my first shot of the season, that somehow, my swing would be perfect or at least as imperfect as last year but certainly no worse. Is this too much to ask???

Golfers get hurt! – a part from being hit by golf balls, most players experience some kind of repetitive strains each season that limits their play. Typical areas involved among male golfers are low back followed by elbow and shoulder, among female golfers wrist followed closely by elbow and low back.

After attending a Golf Seminar last weekend where the presenters were a perfect union of a golf professional and a physiotherapist, I have the following tips to share in my quest for the perfect score (without using an eraser!)

- Warm up before a game – (that does not include running to the tee- box with your shoe laces still undone!). A complete golf swing requires virtually full spine range of movement as well as flexibility in shoulders, hips, elbows and wrists. Trying to execute your tee-shot without proper warm-up is not conducive to a happy ending!
- Check in with a golf professional or a golf-experienced physiotherapist about your swing mechanics – there is a huge amount of research and data available to the experienced professionals that can clue you in. Proper positioning when addressing the ball will give you improved flexibility while at the same time decreasing stresses in the other joints that would otherwise compensate for your inadequate swing. A good spinal position with trunk control (remember those abdominals!) will maximize your swing (gives you good rotational power) at the same time protecting your low back – this means the ball will go further!! This strength/flexibility component can be devised by your physiotherapist as part of your golf program
- Repetitive stresses causing elbow tendonitis can be due to grip position or grip pressure. A golf professional can give you pointers on your grip position/grip size, one way of decreasing grip pressure is to replace your grips every 75 rounds (this would include practices/warm-up at the range). It is also advisable to wash your grips every 10 rounds with soap

and water (and I don't even wash my clubs!). This will improve your grip friction thus decreasing the need to grip overly tight

- Early intervention is crucial – approximately 50% of all golf injuries become chronic. Who needs that when all you want is to hit the ball long and straight! Even though most people are not shy to give you advise (it's usually someone with a killer slice!), it is best to seek help from professionals who have a good understanding for the game and its mechanics.

E-mail me at [mimi@fifthavephysiotherapy.com](mailto:mimi@fifthavephysiotherapy.com) - any comments or questions are most welcome.

Meanwhile, have a swinging good time!!