

TENNIS ELBOW AND ITS REHABILITATION

Chapter 6

Feyzan CANKURTARAN¹

Known as lateral epicondylitis, tennis elbow shows itself with prevalent musculoskeletal complaints in the proximal and lateral of the elbow. These complaints are generally pain and functional disability. The diagnosis was introduced by a researcher, named Runge, in the year of 1873 (1). Lateral epicondylitis affects 1-3% of the general population every year. Although it is stated that it affects both genders in some sources, some of them state that women are affected more. Lateral epicondylitis generally affects people in the age group of 30-60. Although it is named to be tennis elbow, tennis is a factor in only in 5-10% of the cases, and it can occur in any stage of their life of 40-50% of the people playing tennis. It is seen in 59 of every 1000 people among industry workers, and the World Health Organization (WHO) classified lateral epicondylitis as a reason of disability as it limits the work capacity in 1980, and it is a cause of early retirement (1,2).

Although lateral epicondylitis is known for more than a hundred years, its etiology could not be understood certainly. Nirschl was the first person who explained the etiologic factor and stated that the mechanic disorder in the elbow applied a force, increasing the load on the force system, and insufficient front arm extensor muscle power and endurance cause intrinsic overload, while insufficient front arm extensor muscle flexibility causes extrinsic overload. In the literature, 26 potential mechanisms were suggested, and they were divided into 3 groups as neuroirritative process, repeating pain and tendon damage. It is said that genetic, chemical, vascular and hormonal factors take roles in the etiology of lateral epicondylitis. As its etiology is not certainly known, it is thought that repetitive micro-traumas and excessive usage are effective factors. In the occurrence of the symptoms, the repetitiveness of the movement is more important than the force which is needed to make the move. With the repeated traumas, occurring as the result of excessive usage, partial or complete ruptures can develop in the tendon. In the works, which require gripping and such turning movements as supination and pronation in the wrist, or in those who do this kind of sports, the extensor

¹ Assist. Prof. Dr., Nuh Naci Yazgan University, fcankurtaran@nny.edu.tr

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