



## How would you like to drop a few strokes off your handicap?

Spring is certainly upon us, and the Arnold Palmer or Happy Gilmore inside of us is dying to get out and onto our beautiful local courses.

The problem with golf is most people look at it like a hobby and not a sport and therefore generally don't warm up or stretch effectively before trying to belt the cover off that little white ball.

Hi I'm Myotherapist Steve Morris the latest addition to the team at Australia Wide Myotherapy (Kilmore and Wallan Myotherapy Clinics) and I'd like to share with you some valuable information about a passion of mine GOLF.

Let's face it, swinging a stick at over 100kph while bending and twisting to hit a little ball is not a natural movement... as a result statistics show that over 80% of amateur golfers will play at least a few rounds of golf in pain!

More importantly, these statistics show us that this pain usually comes from one of three common golf injuries: Lower Back Pain, Shoulder Pain or as the name suggests Golfers Elbow.

Generally speaking Golf injuries fall into two broad categories, cumulative injuries (Sprains and Strains) usually the result of overuse and acute or traumatic injuries and if we look at the ergonomics of a golf swing it stands to reason that injuries will most commonly occur within these three regions as this is where there is the most repetition and force applied to your body.

**So let's take a look at these injuries:**

### **1. Lower Back Strain**

The Golf Swing can be quite a traumatic experience for your lower back... whenever there is flexion, rotation and force applied to your lumbar spine you are at risk of muscle strain and typical overuse injuries or more serious disc injury. These injuries are much more painful and much more serious. They can occur when we bend and twist under load, especially if there is an underlying pathology or history of low back pain/injury. Disc injuries often lead to surgery and months of recovery and rehabilitation.

## 2. Shoulder (Rotator Cuff) Strain

The main symptoms of rotator cuff injuries are shoulder pain and weakness. Pain is generally a dull ache into the shoulder and upper arm especially after activity in the case of a strain or sharp pain and severe loss of movement in the case of a rotator cuff tear.

In most cases of rotator cuff strain the symptoms start off gradually and slowly get worse to include neurological symptoms like pins and needles into the hand and fingers especially at night. In the case of a tear there is usually one incident that you can put it down to like a fall or lifting a heavy object.

## 3. Golfers Elbow

Golfers Elbow or Medial Epicondylitis is often a result of overuse and improper use. So, don't strangle your club or buggy handle as your pushing it up to the green. If you do suffer from Golfers Elbow the best thing you can do after activity is ICE your elbow and using an elbow brace is definitely recommended.

## The HARD FACTS

The average age of a golfer in Australia in 2009 was **59.1 years old**.

Unfortunately, the older we get the tighter and weaker our lower back and core muscles are and age related changes in our tendons leave them weaker and less elastic and therefore more prone to injury. What is more unfortunate there is **no way to avoid these injuries** with a body that is not fit for golf!

So given the average age of a golfer in Australia is almost 60 years and Golf is a sport that involves walking many kilometres, bending and twisting with great force to hit that ball (for many of us over 100 times a round) what can we do?

## ***GET FIT FOR GOLF***

That's right it doesn't matter how old you are if you can improve your flexibility, core strength and overall fitness for golf you could be part of the 20% of golfers that do not suffer these injuries. How do I do this I hear you say? The most effective way is to be assessed professionally for flexibility, muscle strength and muscle imbalance. The team at Kilmore and Wallan Myotherapy including our Myotherapists and Exercise Scientist's can assess your fitness for golf, provide you with a treatment plan to correct any muscle imbalances or pre existing soft tissue injuries and most importantly provide you with a simple stretching and exercise routine specific to golf and most importantly for YOU!

Until you get a chance to pop into either the Kilmore or Wallan Myotherapy Clinics here is a simple routine that I have put together with my good friend and Hidden Valleys PGA director of Golf, Justin Hooper. Follow this routine and we bet that you notice the difference the next time you tee off.

NB: These stretches are a guide only please remember to do each stretch slowly and gently and don't bounce! If you feel any pain STOP IMMEDIATELY! and consult your therapist.

1. Warm up with a Walk for 2 min swinging your arms starting in small arcs that gradually get bigger until your hand is level with your shoulder
2. Swing your hips in circles clock wise and anti clockwise (10 times each way)
3. Stretch your Hamstrings and Quads (Leg Muscles)
4. Lying on the ground stretch your abs (do a push up but leave your pelvis on the floor)
5. Stretch lower back (lying on your back raise your knee and push it across your other leg with the opposite hand)
6. Stretch your gluts (Lying on your back pull your knee to your opposite shoulder)
7. Roll your shoulders forward and back (10 times each way)
8. Stretch your shoulders
9. Stretch your forearms

Next time you hit the course, do yourself a favor and get there five minutes early to give this simple routine a try. If you suffer from any of the above symptoms due to golf, work or just life in general give the team at Australia Wide Myotherapy - Kilmore and Wallan Myotherapy Clinics a call and book an assessment and treatment on 03 57 822 844.

### Remember

Always stretch slowly and gently and if you feel any pain stop the stretch immediately and consult your Myotherapist before resuming these stretches.