

Spring Tune Up for your Golf Game

As the weather gets nicer many of you are bringing out your clubs, cleaning your shoes and your best pair of plaid pants, just waiting to show your stuff on the greens. Golf for many is a hobby, something to be enjoyed as you walk the greens with a friend, not something you struggle through as you fight through pain, poor shots and a frustrating day. Almost one quarter of amateur golfers suffer from injury each year. The two most common areas of injury are low back and elbow. Here are some suggestions to keep you limber and pain free for your golf season.

The biggest thing you can do to prevent injury is to ensure a proper warm up and cool down. The key to both is to make the transition gradual. Before you take that first big shot take 5 minutes first doing a few of these;

- Swing your arms like you are swimming forwards and back.
- Warm up your back, with torso twists, bend forward touch your toes, bend side to side.
- Practice swings, starting light, gradually swing harder.

Your cool down should be similar except in reverse; finish your game strong and then gradually decrease intensity;

- Swing shoulders and arms forwards and back.
- Torso twists, bend forward and side to side.
- Forearm stretches: extend your elbow, pull your hand into flexion and extension, hold for 30 seconds (great for avoiding Golfer's Elbow!).

After a long 18 holes, it is important to rid your muscles of the waste they create as they contract. Otherwise that waste will sit in your muscles and could cause pain and achiness for days, preventing your tired muscles from regenerating. If you do feel pain, don't try to play through it! Try rest and ice, remembering a visit to a therapist is always better earlier rather than later so they can get you back playing sooner. That is what having a hobby is all about, getting out and enjoying yourself for as long as the Newfoundland summer lets you!