Tennis elbow, or lateral epicondylitis, is a painful inflammation of the elbow joint caused by repetitive stress (overuse). The pain is located on the outside (lateral side) of the elbow, but may radiate down the back of your forearm. You'll likely feel the pain when you straighten or fully extend your arm. What causes tennis elbow? The tendon is the part of a muscle that attaches to the bone. Forearm tendons attach the forearm muscles to the outer bone of the elbow. Tennis elbow is a condition caused by inflammation of the tendons on the outside of the elbow at a bony prominence (lateral epicondyle) of the upper arm. Read about lateral epicondylitis symptoms, treatment, exercises, and surgery. What Are Tennis Elbow Symptoms and Signs? When Should Someone Seek Medical Care for Tennis Elbow? How Do Health Care Professionals Diagnose Tennis Elbow? Are There Home Remedies for Tennis Elbow? What Are Tennis Elbow Treatments? Tennis elbow is a painful condition that affects athletes most often, especially those that use their arms frequently and in repetitive ways, like tennis players and golfers. Tennis elbow (the common name for the condition known as lateral epicondylitis) is caused by inflammation around the elbow, which causes stiffness, swelling, joint pain and trouble moving the arm normally.