Golf injuries

Keeping yourself on the course

Annually, roughly 25 million people in the United States hit the golf course. Golf may be a low-impact sport, but it still has its share of injuries. With proper technique and conditioning, golf can be played for a lifetime. Follow these tips to keep yourself fit.

Shoulder: Shoulder muscles are very active throughout the golf swing and can lead to aches and strains. Rotator cuff problems and arthritis are common shoulder injuries.

Helpful tip: Stretch your arms and shoulder muscles with a good warm-up routine. Band exercises can help strengthen the shoulder. More than 80 percent of golfers spend less than 10 minutes warming up. Golfers who did warm-up had fewer injuries.

Wrist: Most wrist injuries are caused by overuse. Many wrist problems are caused by over gripping or poor technique.

Helpful tip: Rely on your arm strength to lift the club, not your wrist. Get checked out if wrist pain persists. Overuse injuries are often treated with rest and splinting. Weight training can help strengthen your muscles.

Lower back: Pain in the lower back is the most common golfer complaint. The swing puts pressure on your spine and back muscles. Powerful rotation and extension of motion in the golf swing can cause lower back pain.

Helpful tip: Always warm up and stretch before teeing up. Core strengthening and proper technique will also help.

Elbow: Do you remember how your arm felt the last time your club hit the ground? The elbow takes the brunt of the force. Poor form can also cause golfer’s elbow, which is pain and inflammation in the muscles.

Helpful tip: Be careful to hit the ball and not the ground to avoid shock injury to the dominant hand. Using too much force in a swing can put stress on the outside of the elbow. A good warm-up is important, as is a good strengthening program.

Sources
- National Golf Foundation website.
- Healthy Headlines article. Fore! Let’s look at golf’s most common injuries; Dec. 3, 2015.

If you ever need orthopedics or sports medicine specialists, visit NovantHealth.org/orthopedics to find experts who can help you get back to the activities you enjoy.