



Biceps Tendonitis

The biceps muscle is located on the front of your upper arm, and is one of the muscles which bends your arm. There are two muscle bellies or 'heads' of the bicep. A separate tendon attaches each head to bone in the shoulder area. A common tendon attaches the lower portion of the muscle to the elbow region. Occasionally, the tendons will become irritated by overuse, degeneration, inflammation or because they are rubbing against bone. This results in inflammation and pain.

Initially, treatment will focus on decreasing the inflammation and irritation using therapeutic modalities, soft tissue techniques, ice and by decreasing the aggravating factors. The bicep muscle must be slowly re-strengthened so that it is better able to tolerate stress.

The therapeutic modalities commonly used include:

Ultrasound: uses sound waves and may be used to decrease scar tissue, increase blood flow, or decrease pain.

Interferential Current: uses electrical current to decrease pain, can also be used to elicit muscle contraction and decrease swelling.

Acupuncture: uses small, solid needles to encourage healing, reduce pain, and improve function of affected areas of the body.

What can you do at home?

Rest: by decreasing your activity you allow your body a chance to heal itself. When you start to feel better it is important to ease back into activities which might be aggravating. Listen to your body - pain means that you have done too much.

Ice: ice decreases the metabolism of your cells so that they do not die despite a decrease in oxygen to the injured area. Ice should be kept on for approximately 15 minutes, several times a day. The injured area should be elevated (above the level of your heart) at the same time. Use a wet towel between the ice and your skin to protect against frostbite. You can use frozen veggies, cold packs, or real ice.

