

Elbow Hyperextension Injury (Over straightening of the Elbow).

What is an elbow hyperextension injury?

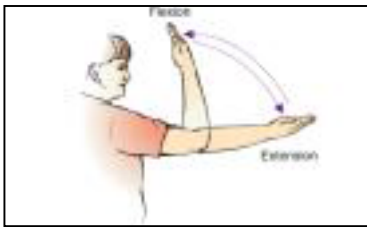


Figure 1: Hyperextension.



Figure 1A: Location of Pain Round Elbow.

An elbow hyperextension injury occurs when the elbow is bent back the wrong way. This type of injury occurs more frequently in sports such as rugby, but can occur in soccer when a player is involved in a collision with an opponent. The elbow is forced to bend the wrong way, or hyperextend, causing damage to the ligaments and muscles of the elbow (See Figure 1).

What are the symptoms?

The player will remember a specific incident during the game and notice pain, swelling or bruising around the elbow. There will be pain localised to the elbow. Often the player will be able to continue training or playing, but afterwards will have pain and a severe restriction in movement.



Figure 2: Strapping.

What can the player do?

When the injury occurs the player should immediately apply the RICE treatment (Rest, Ice, Compression, Elevation). The player should rest until the symptoms resolve. While the elbow is healing, strapping can be worn to prevent the elbow from hyper extending (bending backwards) (See Figure 2). If pain persists, the player should seek the advice of a sports injury professional.

What can a sports injury professional do?

A sports injury professional can advise on rehabilitation, including stretching and treatment options such as acupuncture and ultrasound, to help reduce pain and swelling. A physiotherapist could apply taping to give the elbow support and prevent hyperextension. If the injury is severe, an x-ray may be required to substantiate any bony damage (a fracture for example). Most importantly, a physiotherapist will advise on the return to training and football. Seeing a physiotherapist provides the elbow with the best possible recovery, which could prevent further injuries from occurring.

