

HELEN TO THE RESCUE

Pickleball-Don't Get Paddled with Injuries

What began as a pastime for a congressman from Washington, and a businessman has become a global sensation. It all began in 1965 during a summer afternoon when two families had nothing to do. They grabbed ping-pong paddles, a perforated plastic ball and set out to their badminton court to cook something up. Little did they know they were creating a sport that would popularize and become one of America's most popular pastimes. This is especially true since the eruption of a global pandemic that forced us to find ways to entertain ourselves while maintaining social distance.

Pickleball is not all fun and games, as it coincides with quite an extensive list of injuries. This fast-paced game requires a lot of quick reactions, running, quick pivots, lunging, rotating and twisting, which puts a lot of strain on the body. The movements of pickleball are similar to tennis, so many of the injuries incurred and recommended stretches can benefit those players as well.



INJURIES YOU MIGHT ENCOUNTER WHILE ON THE COURT:

- Shoulder
- Achilles strains or tears
- Rotator cuff
- Lower back problems, disc injuries or muscle strains
- Lateral epicondylitis, commonly known as tennis elbow

STRENGTHEN BEFORE YOU PADDLE

BIRD DOG

Stand with your hands on the back of a chair, with your neck and spine straight, knees slightly bent. Lift the opposite leg and arm in line with your spine. Repeat on the other side.

SIDE LUNGE

Stand with feet shoulder-width apart, toes pointing forward.

Take a 12- to 24-inch step to the side. Shift your hips toward the step direction and slightly bend your knee to create a side lunge. Keep your knee in line with the ankle and your weight even on the foot.

TRUNK TWISTS FOR SPINE AND UPPER BACK

Stand tall with your feet hip-width apart and knees slightly bent. Roll your shoulders back and down while stretching your arms straight out to your sides in line with your shoulders in a "T" position. Slowly rotate your torso to the right as far as is comfortable, and then rotate to the left.

WALKING LUNGE

Stand tall with your feet hip-width apart. Step forward with your left leg, letting your right heel lift off the floor. From this staggered stance, bend your front and back knee to lower your body as far as comfortable. Keep your weight pressed into your front heel.

HEEL RAISES

Stand tall with your hands on a sturdy support object. With your toes pointing straight ahead, shift onto the balls of both feet and slowly lower your heels back down.

Remember to do these exercises slowly and continually without holding any position for more than 5 seconds.

I hope this keeps you out of a pickle



Yours in Fitness,
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Helen's love of fitness began at an early age. She practiced dance and gymnastics as well as track and field. She's an Exercise Physiologist with over 35 years of experience. She is also a certified personal trainer, corrective exercise specialist, nutrition consultant and Senior fitness specialist.

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