

Mayo Clinic minute: Researching tennis wrist injuries

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From beginners to the pros, injuries from playing tennis do happen, especially in the wrist.

Whether it's the serve, forehand, backhand or volley, [tennis](#) puts a lot of stress on your wrist.

"There are about 18 million [tennis players](#) in the United States. And when we talk about injuries in the upper extremity, about 30% in tennis players are wrist injuries. That's a high number," says Dr. Sanj Kakar, a Mayo Clinic hand and wrist surgeon.

Many of those injuries are caused by chronic overuse.

"In the average tennis match, there are over 1,000 ground strokes. Now if you're practicing three, four times a week, for two, three hours, maybe not hit 1,000 shots. Maybe just practice on volleying," says Dr. Kakar.

How you grip the racket and hit the ball plays a major role, too, which is why Mayo researchers recently studied tennis players' strokes in a motion analysis lab.

"With our research, we've learned—just by looking at the various muscles and [motion capture technology](#)—we can really break it down to the millisecond to see which muscles are firing appropriately and which ones aren't," says Dr. Kakar. "I've actually had patients who we've operated on, and they've gone through this program to see that actually, when they're hitting a topspin, their wrist is in the wrong position. That can't be picked up with the [naked eye](#). And now they can work with their tennis professionals to improve their form to hopefully prevent further injury."

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