Physical Therapy Protocol

Lateral Epicondylitis – Non-Operative Management

General Instructions

- Focus on active range of motion (AROM) of the elbow, forearm, and wrist
- Emphasize stretching of wrist extensors, especially at the extensor origin
    - To maximize stretch:
        - Elbow extended
        - Forearm pronated
        - Wrist fully flexed

Strengthening Guidelines

- Begin strengthening only after pain-free stretching is possible
- Emphasize eccentric strengthening of the wrist extensors
- All wrist extensor exercises should be performed with:
    - Elbow flexed
    - Hand relaxed (not in a fist)
    - This helps avoid increasing lateral elbow pain

Progression:

1. Submaximal isometric exercises
2. Resistance bands
3. Weights as tolerated

Treatment Focus

- Progress from flexibility → strength → endurance
- Provide patient instruction on counter-force bracing
- Issue and review a personalized Home Exercise Program (HEP)

Adjunct Therapy

- Apply heat before exercise and ice afterward
- Provide soft tissue massage:
    - Along and against the muscle fiber orientation

Modalities

(Per therapist's preference)

- Iontophoresis
- Heat and Ice
- Massage
- Dry needling
- Instrument-Assisted Soft Tissue Mobilization (IASTM)
- Mulligan mobilizations
- Kinesiology taping (KT taping)

Progression Guidelines

- Progress exercises and activity **as tolerated**
- Emphasize comfort, inflammation control, and gradual return to normal function

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Treatment Plan

- **Frequency:** 2–3 times per week
- **Duration:** 6 weeks