

INTERVAL TENNIS PROGRAM

Dr. Walter R. Lowe

The interval tennis program is designed so that the athlete can achieve each individual level of tennis without pain or complication. The ITP should be supplemented with a weight training program and a flexibility program to maintain the athlete in top physical condition. Weight training should be done on a tennis day and should emphasize high repetition with low weight as a maintenance program for the athlete. The athlete should be hitting every other day and using the day between for flexibility and rest. This program has been set up to minimize the risk for re-injury and emphasize warm-up, stretching, proper body and tennis mechanics, and the importance of weight training with the tennis player.

Baseline requirements of hitting include:

1. Clearance by the athlete's physician
2. Pain-free range of motion
3. Adequate muscle power
4. Adequate muscle resistance to fatigue

The athlete should warm-up by jogging, biking, or jumping rope to increase blood flow and increase the muscular flexibility. Following warm-up, stretching should be performed. Emphasis should be placed on proper technique and body mechanics. The velocity of the tennis ball is determined by the distance of the hit and the ball should only have enough speed to travel the appropriate distance. The athlete should begin with warm-up mini tennis. The goal is to be able to hit the specified distance 160 times without pain.

During the recovery process the athlete may experience soreness and possibly a dull, aching sensation in the muscles and tendons. If the athlete experiences sharp pain, particularly in the joint, stop all tennis activity until the pain ceases and call the athlete's physician if pain continues.

This program is based on an individual tennis player, and because all players will vary, there is no time for completion of the program. It is essential that the player complete each individual phase with the proper technique and body mechanics and without an increase in pain. Once the phase has been completed, the athlete then progresses to the next phase. This sets up a progression that an individual goal is achieved prior to advancement instead of advancing at a specified time. This will greatly decrease the chance for re-injury and greatly increase the most adequate and safest route to return to competition.

Key to interval tennis program:

- OH – overhead shots
- FH – forehand shots
- BH – backhand shots

	Monday	Wednesday	Friday
Week 1	12 FH 8 BH 10' rest 13 FH 7 BH	15 FH 8 BH 10' rest 15 FH 7 BH	15 FH 10 BH 10' rest 15 FH 10 BH
Week 2	25 FH 15 BH 10' rest 25 FH 15 BH	30 FH 20 BH 10' rest 30 FH 20 BH	30 FH 25 BH 10' rest 30 FH 15 BH 10 BH
Week 3	30 FH 25 BH 10 OH 10' rest 30 FH 25 BH 10 OH	30 FH 25 BH 15 OH 10' rest 30 FH 25 BH 15 OH	30 FH 30 BH 15 OH 10' rest 30 FH 15 OH 10' rest 30 FH 30 BH 15 OH
Week 4	30 FH 30 BH 10 OH 10' rest play 3 games 10 FH 10 BH 5 BH	30 FH 30 BH 10 OH 10' rest play set 10 FH 10 BH 5 OH	30 FH 30 BH 10 OH 10' rest play 1.5 sets 10 FH 10 BH 3 OH