



PREVENTION OF OVERUSE INJURIES IN BASEBALL

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Overuse injuries—especially those related to the shoulder and elbow—are preventable. Avoiding overuse injuries as a young athlete will prevent premature breakdown later in a player's career. This is especially true with pitchers.

Tips to stay healthy and in the game:

- Warm up properly by stretching, running, and easy, gradual throwing
- Rotate playing other positions besides pitcher
- Concentrate on age-appropriate pitching (see below)
- Adhere to Little League Baseball pitch count guidelines (see below)
- Avoid pitching on multiple teams with overlapping seasons
- Mandatory rest day between pitching outings. Don't pitch on consecutive days
- Schedule 2-3 month 'break' from baseball during the year. Avoid playing year round.
- Limit use of a radar gun. Injury rates increase due to 'over-throwing'
- Communicate regularly about how your arm is feeling and if there is pain
- Emphasize control, accuracy, and good mechanics
- Master the fastball first and the change-up second, before considering breaking pitches
- If there is any shoulder or elbow pain with throwing, stop and rest. If the pain persists despite rest, see a doctor
- Speak with a sports medicine professional if you have any concerns about baseball injuries or baseball injury prevention strategies

Maximum Pitch Counts

Age	Pitches/Game
7-8	50
9-10	75
11-12	85
13-16	95
17-18	105

Rest Periods Required by Pitch Volume

Ages 14 and under	Ages 15-18	Required Days of Rest
66+	76+	4 calendar days
51-65	61-75	3 calendar days
36-50	46-60	2 calendar days
21-35	31-45	1 calendar days
1-20	1-30	None

Age Recommended for Various Pitches

Pitch	Age
Fastball	8 +/- 2
Slider	16 +/- 2
Change-Up	10 +/- 3
Forkball	16 +/- 2
Curveball	14 +/- 2
Knuckleball	15 +/- 3
Screwball	17 +/- 2

Source: From work by James R. Andrews, MD, and Glenn S. Fleisig, PhD



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