



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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