

Education on Youth Baseball Injuries

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- 1/3 of youth baseball pitchers will experience shoulder or elbow pain during the season
- Youth pitching injuries have increased sixfold in the early 2000's (Dr. James Andrews, ASMI)
- 7-20% of all baseball players ages 9-15 will suffer an injury requiring medical attention
- Players averaging more than 85 pitches per outing are 4x more likely to develop an injury
- These injuries are overwhelmingly due to one cause...OVERUSE.

These numbers are likely higher today, but thankfully both Little League Baseball and USA Baseball have consulted with industry experts and established pitch count rules.

Guidelines can be found here: <http://m.mlb.com/pitchsmart/>

A recent study in Sports Health

<http://sph.sagepub.com/content/early/2012/02/01/1941738111435632.abstract>

polled 95 youth baseball coaches about their knowledge of the safety guidelines established by the USA Baseball Medical and Safety Advisory Committee. The results were concerning.

- Only 43% of questions were answered correctly
- 27% of coaches admit to not following safety guidelines, however 53% of coaches felt that other coaches in the league followed safety guidelines
- 19% of coaches admitted they allowed a pitcher to pitch with a sore elbow or shoulder

Results from a study sponsored by the American Orthopaedic Society for Sports Medicine of over 700 pitchers in the United States between the ages of 9 and 18 have noted 1/3 of the pitchers having a pitching-related injury in the past 12 months, 7 out of 10 reported significant arm tiredness in the past 12 months, and nearly 40% reported significant arm pain within the past 12 months.

More importantly, the study was able to quantify the percentage of youth baseball pitchers that were performing activities that have been correlated to increase injury risk:

- ✓ 40% pitched in a league without pitch counts or limits
- ✓ 13% of pitchers pitched competitively for more than 8 months of the year
- ✓ 57% on back to back days
- ✓ 19% pitched more than one game in the same day
- ✓ Nearly 33% of these pitchers pitched for more than one team during the same season
- ✓ 10% also played catcher on the same day

Information compiled from www.mikereinold.com

Recommended pitch counts and rest days can be found here:

http://www.littleleague.org/assets/forms_pubs/media/pitchingregulationchanges_bb_11-13-09.pdf

Little League Pitch Count FAQ can be found here:

http://www.littleleague.org/Assets/old_assets/media/pitchcount_faq_08.pdf

For more information on Pitch Smart: <http://m.mlb.com/pitchsmart/>

The American Orthopaedic Society for Sports Medicine has developed a handbook on the Prevention and Emergency Management of Youth Baseball and Softball Injuries and it can be viewed here:

http://www.sportsmed.org/uploadedFiles/Content/Medical_Professionals/Professional_Educational_Resources/Publications_and_Resources/Youth_Baseball_Injury_Prevention_Book/AOSSM%20Youth%20BB%20and%20SB%20Injuries%20Interactive.pdf

Additional resources:

Download the 'Throw Like a Pro' app on your smartphone or similar device. This app includes a simple 'pitch count' feature you can use in-game. It also includes information about pre-season and in-season conditioning.

Little League http://www.littleleague.org/Little_League_Online.htm

Stop Sports Injuries <http://www.stopsportsinjuries.org/>