



Pain in the Growing Thrower’s Arm TREATMENT AND PREVENTION

COACH/PARENT GUIDELINES

Throwing injuries in young athletes are on the rise, caused in large part by throwing too much, too hard, too early, and without rest. Many of these “overuse” injuries of the shoulder and elbow can be prevented and treated with a player, coach, and parent agreeing on some principles that protect the developing arm. Tips to keep you in the game include the following:

- Warm-up with stretching, running, and easy gradual throwing
- Rotate through positions and do not just pitch, although do not play catcher on pitching days
- Adhere to pitch count guidelines established by Little League Baseball (below)

Age	Pitches per Day
6-8	50 pitches
9-10	75 pitches
11-12	85 pitches
13-16	95 pitches

- Avoid playing on multiple teams with overlapping seasons
- Do not play year-round (recommended four months per year maximum)
- Do not pitch or throw with pain, and keep the coach advised if pain is developing
- Plan to take a full week off of throwing when pain begins
- Do not pitch on consecutive days
- Do not throw for a radar gun
- Concentrate on good mechanics and ask for feedback(1)
- Do not throw breaking balls until the fastball (first) and changeup (second) have been mastered and do not attempt to throw curveballs prior to high school(1)
- Adhere to rest periods based on age and number of pitches (below)

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



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TREATMENT FOR OVERUSE INJURIES

The mainstay of treatment for pain in the throwing arm is rest. Throwing should not be resumed until the pain subsides; depending on the rest period, a course of rehabilitation may be required to improve muscle bulk, coordination, flexibility, and endurance. Once the pain is gone and the arm has full motion, a throwing program can resume. Uncommonly, surgery may be necessary to correct a problem.

References:

1. Fortenbaugh D, Fleisig GS, Andrews JR. Baseball pitching biomechanics in relation to injury risk and performance. *Sports Health*. 2009 Jul;1(4):314-20. doi: 10.1177/1941738109338546. PMID: 23015888; PMCID: PMC3445126.