



Pediatric and Adolescent Sports Medicine Update

3rd Quarter 2011

Softball Overuse Injury Prevention

by Drew E. Warnick, M.D.

Softball injuries in young female athletes are on the rise and occurring nearly as frequently as baseball injuries. The most common softball injuries include back, shoulder, forearm, wrist and hand. Pitcher injuries differ from position player injuries because pitchers use a windmill type throwing motion that places unique demands on the body.

The most common overuse injury for pitchers are shoulder tendonitis, back or neck pain, and elbow, forearm, and wrist tendonitis. The most common overuse injuries for catchers is back and knee problems in addition to overhead throwing shoulder problems.



Pitching Restrictions

Age	Pitches/Game	Pitches/Game Days 1 & 2	Pitches/Game Day 3
8-10	50	80	-
11-12	65	95	-
13-14	80	115	80
15- over	100	140	100

Resting

Girls < 12 years– only 2 days of consecutive pitching
 Girls > 13 years– only 3 days of consecutive pitching

Rest means no live pitches, which includes batting practice. Pitchers may need to 'loosen up' with a flexibility routine on the second day of rest and can participate in hitting and field drills.



**Children's Orthopaedic
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Overuse injuries– especially those related to the elbow and shoulder– are preventable!

Some useful tips to keep your child in the game include:

- Proper warm-up; which includes stretching, running, easy and gradual throwing
- Rotate positions while on the field
- Concentrate on age-appropriate pitching
- Adhere to pitching count guidelines
- Avoid pitching on multiple teams with overlapping seasons
- Don't pitch while you have elbow or shoulder pain
- Communicate regularly about how your arm feels
- Emphasize control, accuracy, and good mechanics
- Talk with a sports medicine trainer or sports medicine physician if you have any concerns about injuries



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