



Pediatric and Adolescent Sports Medicine Update

1st Quarter 2011

Shoulder and Elbow Injuries in Youth Baseball

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Shoulder and elbow injuries in young baseball players is on the rise. Thousands of young baseball players are seen every year with shoulder and/or elbow pain caused by pitchers throwing too much.

If a young athlete is throwing too hard, too much, or too early, a serious elbow or shoulder injury may occur. If a young athlete complains of elbow or shoulder pain the day after throwing, or movement of the elbow or shoulder is painful or restricted, consult a physician immediately.



Age (years)	Maximum pitches/game	Maximum games/week	Maximum pitches/week	Maximum pitches/season	Maximum pitches/year
8 to 10	50	2	75	1000	2000
11 to 12	75	2	100	1000	3000
13 to 14	75	2	125	1000	3000
15 to 16	90	2	-	-	-
17 to 18	105	2	-	-	-



Pitches in a day	Rest
51	5 days of rest, and a game, must be observed
41 to 60	4 days of rest, and a game, must be observed
21 to 40	3 days of rest must be observed
1 to 20	1 day of rest is required

*5 pitches maximum between innings; 12 to 15 before game



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

Pitch	Age (Years)
Fastball	8 ± 2
Change-Up	10 ± 3
Curveball	14 ± 2
Knuckleball	15 ± 3
Slider	16 ± 2
Forkball	16 ± 2
Screwball	17 ± 2



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