

Keep youth baseball players safe on the field

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Avoid overuse-related injuries of the elbows and shoulders, expert says.

(HealthDay) -- Youth baseball season will soon begin, and parents and coaches need to know how to prevent player injuries, a medical expert says.

Shoulder and [elbow injuries](#) are the most common and are typically due to overuse, said Dr. Tony Wanich, an attending surgeon in the orthopedic surgery department at Montefiore Medical Center in New York City.

Appropriate conditioning and training, along with following safe guidelines for play, are the best ways to prevent injury.

Wanich offered the following tips:

- Establish a consistent warm-up routine, including a stretching program where stretches are held for 30 seconds.
- Running is an important part of warm-ups and preseason conditioning. It helps pitchers develop endurance and stamina and position players develop speed and agility.
- Strength training is important for [baseball players](#). Pay special attention to the [rotator cuff](#), biceps, triceps and forearm muscles.
- Pitchers should not pitch on consecutive days. Young pitchers should focus on developing accuracy and control through good pitching mechanics. They should master the fastball before trying other types of pitches.
- Communication between players, parents and coaches can help identify problems before they lead to a more serious injury. [Persistent pain](#) that does not improve with rest should be evaluated by a sports-medicine specialist.
- Parents and coaches should follow player health and safety guidelines established by Little League Baseball.

More information: The Nemours Foundation offers [youth baseball safety tips](#).

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