

## Baseball Injury Prevention Tips

Overuse injury in baseball result most often from pitching. The focus is thus on pitching biomechanics. Kinematics (motions) and kinetics (forces and torques) are computed. It is a high risk of injury, thus baseball pitching has been the focus of much of the research

A lack of conditioning contributes to poor performance and inconsistency.

Proper conditioning cannot, however, be obtained in the 4-5 weeks of preseason practice.



A well-planned, year-round program is needed to minimize the risk of injury

and prepare for peak performance during the competitive season. The saying, "You must condition to play, not play to get into condition" describes a philosophy that is used by successful athletes.

Conditioning needs to be approached with the same motivation and organization as the competitive season. Without proper conditioning, muscles, tendons, ligaments and bones are more likely to



*"...Drugs should be the last line of treatment.... We advice physicians to start with non pharmacologic treatments like therapy"* The Journal of American Heart Association.

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## Hands-on-Care



Specializing in Shoulder, Elbow, Wrist and Hand Therapy

## Baseball Injury Prevention Tips



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## Pitching injury

suffer injury.

This is especially true for the pitcher because each pitch generates tremendous force and stress on the athlete's body, particularly the shoulder and elbow.

Essential to all baseball players is year round and off-season conditioning program.

Players should progress gradually in their conditioning so that they are not throwing, as well as hitting, running, sliding "too hard", "too fast", too far", "too quickly", predisposing themselves to injury.



A structured program should be followed for the greatest benefit.

A year-round program helps to prevent injury and a maintenance program helps to prevent recurrence.

The training program should follow an interval fashion. The athlete should not be training at a competitive (high) level throughout the year; the training program should be formulated so that the athlete reaches peak fitness during the competitive season (**Periodization**).

Off-season conditioning programs should address conditioning, strength training and flexibility.

During the off-season, the exercise program is at a lower level, thus allowing tissue healing; and the program should peak right before the competitive season.

Training at a high level throughout the year will only lead to injury.

A good program includes more than strength training, as muscle strength is only one requirement for performance. Flexibility, speed, power, muscle endurance, aerobic/anaerobic capacity, agility and coordination/skill training are also components of a good conditioning program.

In addition, the athlete must pay attention to nutrition and mental preparation.

Condition the entire body, not just the arm.

Train the muscles with the movement they perform during throwing. For example, the large muscles of the trunk

Train for muscular balance.

Train strength before power or endurance

Emphasize quality of exercise, not quantity.

Train for muscle endurance

Although a conditioning program is used throughout the year, the concept of periodization should be implemented

Flexibility and muscular elasticity have certain advantages for the athlete, there can be a point of diminishing returns. This is particularly true if the athlete does not pay equal attention to building strength to facilitate management of the increased flexibility. As mobility increases, stability decreases and vice versa. The athlete needs both stability and mobility (flexibility). Consequently, to increase mobility without increasing strength to control that mobility is counterproductive.

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