



**Monadnock
Orthopaedic
Associates, P.C.**

458 Old Street Road
Wellness Center, Suite 200
Peterborough, NH 03458

phone: 603.924.2144
fax: 603.924.3993

PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

Date: April 22, 2009

Contact: Patrick Stark, Monadnock Orthopaedic Associates (603) 924-2144
pstark@monadnockortho.com

Swing that Bat into Baseball Season, Injury Free

Caution from parents and coaches can prevent injuries in young baseball players

Peterborough, NH

For generations, baseball has been an American tradition, and also a great way for kids to get some exercise along with their first taste of competitive sports. However, Monadnock Orthopaedic Associates urges safety on the field to keep ballplayers injury-free.

- According to the U.S. Consumer Products Safety Commission in 2007, more than 203,000 children between the ages of 5 and 14 were treated in hospital emergency rooms, doctors' offices, clinics and other medical settings for baseball-related injuries.

"Little league has become a very popular sport among children today," says W. Bradley White, MD, FAAOS, of Monadnock Orthopaedic Associates. "Coaches and parents need to remember that a child's bones, muscles, ligaments, and tendons are still growing, making them more susceptible to injury, especially from overuse."

In fact, one type of overuse injury that comes from throwing too many pitches has become so common in children that many health professionals refer to it as "little league elbow." MOA recommends that coaches and parents protect children from these injuries so they can continue to play ball for years to come.

Here are some tips for parents and coaches to help young athletes prevent baseball injuries. Young athletes should:

- Be in proper physical condition to play a sport, and avoid playing when very tired or in pain.
- Know and abide by the rules of the sport.
- Wear all appropriate protective gear, including batting helmets; athletic supporters; shoes with molded plastic cleats; and catcher's mitts, chest guards, face guards, and knee and shin pads for catchers. Coaches should ensure that the equipment fits properly.
- Always warm up and stretch before exercising. Cold muscles are more likely to get injured, so athletes should warm up with some light exercise for at

least 3 to 5 minutes, then slowly and gently stretch the muscles to be exercised, holding each stretch for at least 30 seconds.

- Do not use steroids and other substances to artificially enhance performance. Parents and coaches should be aware of the symptoms that indicate an athlete is using these dangerous substances.

Further caution should be exercised to prevent elbow injuries and other problems from excessive pitching. Coaches should:

- Follow the guidelines on the number of innings that can be pitched (usually a maximum of four to ten innings a week) as specified by the baseball league.
- Keep track of the number of pitches thrown by an individual player. While there is no concrete guideline, a reasonable number is 80 pitches to 100 as the maximum in a game, and 30 to 40 pitches in a practice.
- Remove any child with persistent pain from the game or practice until the pain subsides.

Finally, youth sports should always be fun. The “win at all costs” attitude of many parents, coaches, and peers can lead to injuries, because a young athlete striving to meet the unrealistic expectations of others may ignore the warning signs of injury and continue to play with pain. Support and caution from parents and coaches can be a young athlete’s greatest protection.

###