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**Visit www.pitchsmart.org
to explore resources provided by the
Advisory Committee**

“Pitch Smart is our game’s most extensive and unified endeavor on the issue of arm safety and reducing the incidence rate of Tommy John surgery. Pitch Smart combines the best expertise in the hopes of educating players, coaches and parents at every level of the game. Ultimately, we believe this program is a long-term step toward keeping present and future pitchers healthy as they progress through all levels of baseball.”

*- Joe Torre, MLB’s Executive Vice President
of Baseball Operations*



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A series of practical, age-appropriate guidelines to help parents, players and coaches avoid overuse injuries and foster long, healthy careers for youth pitchers.



ABOUT PITCH SMART:

USA Baseball and MLB team up to help young players reduce arm injuries by providing a comprehensive resource for safe pitching practices. Baseball is a safe game to play at all ages, but research has shown that pitching too much – particularly at a young age – can increase a pitcher’s risk of injury.

ABOUT TOMMY JOHN SURGERY:

Tommy John surgery is a reconstruction of the ulnar collateral ligament (UCL) of the elbow. A tendon from elsewhere in the body

is used to repair a torn or ruptured UCL. It was first performed by Dr. Frank Jobe in 1974 on Tommy John, a pitcher for the Los Angeles Dodgers.

“Baseball, of course, is our national pastime and it’s supposed to be a safe and healthy sport.”

- Dr. James Andrews

With the number of these surgeries performed every year rising, and the age of the patients becoming younger and younger, it is important that we focus on utilizing safe pitching practices at every level of play, especially youth.

RISK FACTORS:

Some of the factors that increase the risk of arm injury include:

- Pitching while fatigued
- Not taking enough time off from baseball every year
- Throwing too many pitches and not getting enough rest
- Pitching on consecutive days
- Playing for multiple teams at the same time
- Throwing breaking pitches at a young age

PITCH COUNT LIMITS & REQUIRED REST:

AGE	DAILY MAX	REQUIRED REST				
		0 DAYS	1 DAY	2 DAYS	3 DAYS	4 DAYS
7-8	50	1-20	21-35	36-50	--	--
9-10	75	1-20	21-35	36-50	51-65	66+
11-12	85	1-20	21-35	36-50	51-65	66+
13-14	95	1-20	21-35	36-50	51-65	66+
15-16	95	1-30	31-45	46-60	61-75	76+
17-18	105	1-30	31-45	46-60	61-75	76+

AGE RECOMMENDATION HIGHLIGHTS:

General:

- Properly warm up before pitching
- Avoid playing for multiple teams at the same time and pitching in multiple games on the same day
- Play other sports during the course of the year
- Take at least 4 months off from throwing every year, with at least 2-3 of those months being continuous

8 Years Old & Under:

- Focus on athleticism, physical fitness, and fun
- Do not exceed 60 combined innings pitched in any 12 month period
- Avoid throwing pitches other than fastballs and change-ups

9 to 12 Years Old:

All recommendations for 8 years old & under with the addition of:

- Do not exceed 80 combined innings pitched in any 12 month period

13 to 14 Years Old:

- Players can begin using breaking pitches after developing consistent fastball and changeup
- Do not exceed 100 combined innings pitched in any 12 month period

15 to 18 Years Old:

All recommendations for 13 to 14 year olds with the addition of:

- Take at least 4 months off from competitive pitching every year, including at least 2-3 continuous months off from all overhead throwing.

See the full
recommendations at

