

Following pitch count guidelines may help young baseball players prevent injuries

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Young pitchers who exceed pitch count limits are more prone to elbow injuries, according to research presented today at the American Orthopaedic Society for Sports Medicine's Annual Meeting in San Diego. Season statistics of players were compared relative to pitch count limits established by the Japanese Society of Clinical Sports Medicine.

"Our research focused on 149 young pitchers ranging in age from 7 to 11 who had no prior [elbow pain](#)," commented lead author Toshiyuki Iwame, MD, from Tokushima University in Tokushima, Japan. "We found those who reported elbow pain after the season were associated with pitching numbers beyond current throwing guidelines."

Researchers asked the players to complete a questionnaire after the season, which showed 66 (44.3%) experienced pain. Multivariate analysis showed that throwing more than 50 pitches per day (OR, 2.44; 95% CI, 1.22-4.94), 200 pitches per week (OR, 2.04; 95% CI, 1.03-4.10), and 70 games per year (OR, 2.47; 95% CI, 1.24-5.02), the baselines established by the JSCSM, were risk factors for pain.

"As the demand on young pitchers to play more increases, there is less time for repair of bony and soft tissues in the elbow," commented Iwame. "We hope research like this continues to direct young athletes, parents and coaches to follow [pitch](#) limits to prevent injuries."

The study authors noted the player recall bias, reporting of pain detail on the questionnaire, and limited geographical representation were limitations of the research.

Provided by American Orthopaedic Society for Sports Medicine

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