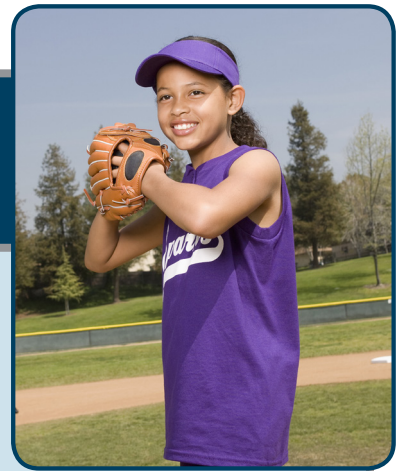


Softball injury prevention



Softball injuries are less common than injuries in contact sports. Being hit by a ball causes the most softball injuries. Overuse shoulder injuries are also very common. Injuries end a season for 10% of players.

What are common softball injuries?

- Shoulder pain
- Broken fingers
- Elbow pain
- Knee pain
- Wrist sprains
- Muscle strains

How can I prevent softball injuries?

- Have a good warm-up program. This prepares your body for softball. It should be a total body program. Warm-ups should use moving stretches (dynamic stretches) and include arm, leg and back muscles.
- Have a good strengthening program. Strengthen upper and lower body muscles. Use good form to prevent overuse injuries.
- Do drills that challenge your balance and body control.
- Include jumping and agility drills. These work on burst-like movements (plyometrics).
- Wear well-fitted safety gear. This means:
 - Rubber-molded, cleated softball shoes
 - Batting helmets worn at the plate, on-deck and running bases
 - Safety glasses or glass guards, if needed
 - Right glove for your position
- Drink plenty of water 30 minutes before games or practices. Drink both water and sports drinks during games and practices. Only drink sports drinks if practice or games are more than 90 minutes.

What can I do before the season starts?

Softball players need a pre-season plan to help get their bodies ready. Start the program at least 4 weeks before the season starts. Pre-season plans include:

- Flexibility
- Agility
- Strength
- Special softball skills
- Balance and coordination
- Learning correct softball throwing and hitting skills
- Endurance

How should I warm up?

It is important to warm up. A basic warm-up should take 15 to 25 minutes.

- Start with 5 minutes of light aerobic activity. This raises the heart rate and warms up muscles.
- Do 10 minutes of dynamic stretches. Stretch your arms, legs and back.
- Finish with 5 minutes of full-speed sprinting and jumping in different directions.
- At the end of practice:
 - Spend time stretching your whole body.
 - Hold each stretch for at least 30 seconds.
 - Stretch for 10 to 15 minutes.

Training guidelines*

Age	Maximum pitch counts		
	Pitches/game	Pitches/day (days 1 and 2)	Pitches/day (day 3)
8-10	50	80	0
10-12	65	95	0
13-14	80	115	80
15 and older	100	140	100

*Rest means no live pitches, including batting practice. Pitchers may need to loosen up with a flexibility routine on the second rest day and can participate in hitting and field drills.

from stopsportsinjuries.org

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