

# Tee-ball injury prevention



Baseball, softball and tee-ball are popular sports for kids. Tee-ball helps kids learn baseball and softball skills. Injury is still a possibility. Focus on safety first.

## What are common tee-ball injuries?

- Getting hit by a ball
- Running into other players
- Falls
- Ankle injuries

## How can I prevent tee-ball injuries?

- Have a good warm-up program. This prepares your body for tee-ball. It should be a total body program. Warm-ups should use moving stretches (dynamic stretches) and include arm, leg and back muscles.
- Do drills that challenge your balance and body control.
- 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
  - A glove that fits the child
- 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.
- Be sure to learn the correct skills for tee-ball.
- At this age, all players should be allowed to play all positions.

## What can I do before the season starts?

Help young arms get ready for the stress of throwing. Take time to slowly increase the amount and force of throwing. Start at least 2 weeks before the season.

Work on:

- Flexibility
- Strength
- Balance and coordination
- Endurance
- Agility
- Tee-ball skills

## 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 running, swings and throwing.
- 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.

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