

Little League Baseball's pitch count requirements are as follows:

10 years and younger	75 pitches per game
11-12 years old	88 pitches per game
13-16 years old	95 pitches per game
17-18 years old	105 pitches per game

The other factor that is often ignored is rest. Throwing is an unnatural motion and puts an unnatural amount of stress on the arm. For young arms, the stress from throwing may be even more detrimental. Before growth plates are fully closed, bones, tendons and muscles are at a greater risk of injury. Injuries that are sustained prior to growth plate closure can also cause bone malformation.

Little League Baseball's Rest Requirements are as follows:

1-20 pitches in a day	No (0) calendar days of rest
21-35 pitches in a day	1 calendar day of rest
36-50 pitches in a day	2 calendar days of rest
51-65 pitches in a day	3 calendar days of rest
66 or more pitches in a day	4 calendar days of rest

For players 15 to 18 years old:

1-30 pitches in a day	No (0) calendar days of rest
31-45 pitches in a day	1 calendar day of rest
46-60 pitches in a day	2 calendar days of rest
61-75 pitches in a day	3 calendar days of rest
75 or more pitches in a day	4 calendar days of rest

Here are some other guidelines from the Institute for Sports Medicine at Children's Memorial Hospital:

- Do not allow pitching through pain! If a young pitcher says that he or she is in pain or is displaying signs of pain or fatigue (shaking or rubbing of the arm, elbow and/or shoulder) pull him or her out of the game.
- Warm-up properly before each game. Throwing does not count as a warm-up! Remember this rule of thumb: Warm-up to throw, don't throw to warm-up. 10 minutes of light jogging, calisthenics and stretching will prepare the body to throw.
- Learn and practice proper pitching mechanics.
- Take at least three consecutive months off from pitching per year.
- Maintain an appropriate body weight and general fitness regimen throughout the year.

I hope you will agree that these elements will serve your young athlete much better in the long run than some dirt and a walk!

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WHY RUBBING SOME DIRT ON IT AND WALKING IT OFF ISN'T ALWAYS THE BEST CURE

By Kate Mitchum

Remember when you got hurt when you were young? It seemed like you could just shake it off, get up and keep going. So why is the number of injuries among young athletes on the rise? For starters, most kids are multi-sport athletes so they don't get a true "off season" to recover. The number of games for travel and elite teams has also increased for most sports, and baseball in particular.

It is estimated that 60% of little league players will develop an overuse injury. What makes overuse injuries so infuriating are two simple facts. First, unlike acute traumatic injuries -- dislocations, hyperextensions, and other mishaps -- injuries caused by overuse are easily prevented. By introducing variety, moderation and rest into an everyday sports routine, a child's risk can be cut to nearly zero. Second, as the adult in your young athlete's life you have the ability to either make them or break them by making decisions and implementing strategies to keep them safe.

For baseball pitchers, almost all overuse injuries are the result of faulty mechanics and a lack of attention to pitch count. A pitch count refers to the number of pitches thrown during a game. It seems like a simple task to keep a pitch count but what most parents and coaches forget is that if a child is finished pitching but has moved to another defensive position on the field, any throws that child makes need to be added to his/her pitch count.