



**PHOENIX ORTHOPEDIC
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Little Leaguers Sore Arms May Be Warning Signs of Serious Injuries

(Glendale, AZ –May 21, 2007) – With the weather warming up and baseball season upon us, parents should be conscious that that their child's athletic activities can lead to pain and injury. Many young baseball players can overuse their arms while practicing and playing, with pitchers being most at risk for elbow injuries.

Most of the overuse injuries that physicians see in young baseball players are from pitching. In a study conducted by Dr. James Andrews, a leading orthopedic surgeon who specializes in sports-related injuries, treatment of elbow related injuries in teens due to overuse has risen 500%. When left untreated, these injuries may be the cause of serious damage. While for some little leaguers with significant damage, surgery is necessary, there are other treatment plans and preventative measures that can be implemented to prevent injuries.

“Initially, some pitchers may have mild symptoms of pain and discomfort located on the inside of their elbow, while, or immediately after pitching or throwing,” stated Dr. Steve Ripple, board certified orthopedic surgeon at Phoenix Orthopedic Consultants who treats shoulders, trauma, and other orthopedic issues. “This one instance of discomfort can quickly elevate to constant discomfort and eventual elbow fractures if the proper treatment is not implemented early. In older boys, the medial ligaments can become so damaged and stretched that it no longer provides enough stability to the elbow for throwing. In these cases, surgery may be needed to reconstruct the ligament, commonly known as ‘Tommy John’ surgery, named after the famous L.A. Dodgers pitcher who received this treatment.”

Once the warning signs have been noticed, a child should rest the elbow for 4-6 weeks. This timeline is often unrealistic for youngsters who are playing baseball year round in Arizona. However, new steps have been implemented by Little League International, in association with Dr. Andrews, to institute regulations to help prevent these injuries. However, educating parents and coaches is the one thing that can be done to try and reverse this alarming trend.

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Most importantly, if parents find that their child is experiencing elbow pain following their athletic activity, they should stop that activity and seek the advice of an orthopedic specialist. He or she can then advise parents about measures that can be implemented to keep their youngsters' bones healthy and alleviate the possibility of long term injuries.

About Phoenix Orthopedic Consultants:

Phoenix Orthopedic Consultants are well known board certified physicians with offices in the west valley for more than 25 years. They are proud members of the Orthopedic Surgeons Network of Arizona. The group currently includes Neal Gimbel, M.D., Marc Rosen, M.D., Kishore Tipirneni, M.D., Jonathan Landsman, M.D., Stephen Ripple, M.D., Eric Novack, M.D., Shane Martin, M.D., Leslie Johnson, F.N.P. and Michelle Hitchcock, P.A.-C. Phoenix Orthopedic Consultants currently have two offices in Glendale, Arizona and specialize in fracture and trauma treatment for children and adults, hand surgery, joint replacement surgery, sports medicine, spine surgery and general orthopedic care. For more information, please visit their website at www.phxortho.com or call (602) 298-8888.

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