

INTERVAL THROWING PROGRAM
SOFTBALL
FASTPITCH PITCHERS
Dr. Walter R. Lowe

The interval throwing program is designed so that the athlete can achieve each individual level of throwing without pain or complication. The ITP should be supplemented with a weight training program and a flexibility program to maintain the athlete in a top physical condition. Weight training should be done on a throwing day and should emphasize high repetition with low weight as a maintenance program for the athlete. The athlete should be throwing every other day and using the day between for flexibility and rest. This program has been set up to minimize the risk for re-injury and emphasize pre-throwing warm-up, stretching, proper body and throwing mechanics, and the importance of weight training with the throwing athlete.

Baseline requirements of throwing include:

1. Clearance by the athlete's physician
2. Pain-free range of motion
3. Adequate muscle power
4. Adequate muscle resistance to fatigue

The athlete should warm-up by jogging, biking, or jumping rope to increase blood flow and increase the muscular flexibility. Following warm-up, stretching should be performed. Emphasis should be placed on proper throwing and body mechanics. The crow-hop method should be used to avoid stress to the throwing arm. The velocity of the throw is determined by the distance of the throw and the ball should only have enough speed to travel the appropriate distance. The athlete should begin with warm-up throws. The goal is to be able to throw the specified distance 75 times without pain.

During the recovery process the athlete may experience soreness and possibly a dull, aching sensation in the muscles and tendons. If the athlete experiences sharp pain, particularly in the joint, stop all throwing activity until the pain ceases and call the athlete's physician if pain continues.

This program is based on an individual thrower, and because all throwers will vary, there is no time for completion of the program. It is essential that the thrower complete each individual phase with the proper throwing and body mechanics and without an increase in pain. Once the phase has been completed, the athlete then progresses to the next phase. This sets up a progression that an individual goal is achieved prior to advancement instead of advancing at a specified time. This will greatly decrease the chance for re-injury and greatly increase the most adequate and safest route to return to competition.

Phase 1- Position Throwing

(Begin each phase with warm-up throwing for 10 minutes and stretching)

(Rest 10 minutes between each set to avoid fatigue and loss of proper mechanics)

45' Phase

Step One

25 throws

25 throws

Step Two

25 throws

25 throws

25 throws

60' Phase

Step Three

25 throws

25 throws

Step Four

25 throws

25 throws

25 throws

90' Phase

Step Five

25 throws

25 throws

Step Six

25 throws

25 throws

25 throws

120' Phase

Step Seven

25 throws

25 throws

Step Eight

25 throws

25 throws

25 throws

Step Nine

25 throws

25 throws

50 throws

Begin throwing off the mound or return to respective position following the 120' phase, step nine.