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## **ADOLESCENT GROWTH PLATE INJURIES MAY BE RELATED TO OVERUSE**

Los Angeles, London, New Delhi, Singapore and Washington DC (April 29, 2009) — Early diagnosis and immobilization of growth plate injuries is key to putting an adolescent athlete back in the game, according to a recent study published in the May/June issue of *Sports Health: A Multidisciplinary Approach* (published by SAGE).

“Overuse injuries in immature athletes are commonly seen in orthopaedic practices. Our analysis illustrates that early recognition and treatment of common overuse injuries such as stress fractures and “Little League Elbow” can lead to quicker recovery and may prevent season or even career ending events from occurring,” said lead author, Todd J. Frush, MD, orthopaedic surgeon and clinical fellow at Cincinnati Sports Medicine.

The study analyzed more than 75 published clinical, outcome and biomechanical studies of adolescent growth plate and overuse injuries through 2008 in order to increase recognition and provide treatment recommendations.

Current research shows that adolescent athletes are more prone to overuse injuries, especially in the wrist, elbow and foot due to their immature musculoskeletal system and not completely fused growth plates. According to researchers, these growing regions in the growth plates allow for the impacts of certain sports such as gymnastics, running and baseball to be absorbed and cause injury at an increased rate.

“Even though growth plate overuse injuries occur frequently in adolescents, it is equally important for clinicians and parents to realize that not all overuse injuries are related to the growth plate and will be something that a child will “grow out of” or play through. Certain growth plate injuries may continue to be symptomatic over a long period of time. If early diagnosis is missed, then healing and significant restrictions on athletic participation can occur. Neglect may also result in long-term problems,” said Frush. “It’s important for athletes to work with trainers and their sports medicine specialists to create a rehabilitation program that safely returns them to an appropriate level of play once healing occurs.”

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Published bimonthly, *Sports Health* is a collaborative publication from the American Orthopaedic Society for Sports Medicine (AOSSM), the American Medical Society for Sports Medicine (AMSSM), the National Athletic Trainers’ Association (NATA), and the Sports Physical Therapy Section (SPTS). Other organizations participating in the publication include the American Academy of Pediatrics and the American Osteopathic Academy of Sports Medicine (AOASM). For more information on the publication or to submit a manuscript, visit [www.sportshealthjournal.org](http://www.sportshealthjournal.org)

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