

Medial Apophysitis (Little Leaguer's Elbow)



Overview

This is an injury of a growth plate on the elbow's inner side. Growth plates are places where new bone tissue forms. They are found near the ends of the long bones of growing children. But growth plates are weaker than the surrounding bone. That makes them easier to injure.

Causes

Medial apophysitis is an overuse injury. It's caused by throwing again and again. It's a problem for young baseball players, especially pitchers. Throwing puts a lot of stress on the elbow's ligaments. These are bands of tissue that stabilize the joint. One of these ligaments attaches to the bony bump on the inner side of the elbow. We call it the "medial epicondyle." As the ligament repeatedly pulls this bump, the nearby growth plate becomes irritated and inflamed. Pieces of bone may begin to tear away. This can cause long term damage.

Symptoms

This injury causes pain on the inner side of your elbow when you throw. You may not be able to throw as hard or as far. Your elbow may swell, and it may be hard to move.

Treatment

Medial apophysitis can often be treated with proper rest and with a better throwing technique. But in some cases, surgery is needed. Your healthcare provider can create a plan that's right for you.

