

Article: The Baseball Zone



The winds have changed, the birds are singing, the snows melted and the days are getting longer. Some players I'm sure have been diligent, working hard on their conditioning and technique throughout the long winter months, while others are beating the dust from their glove and hat, and are moving slowly after a winter of hibernating in doors.

Where ever you fit in the scenario above some things to keep in mind before starting back on wet fields and outdoors in cooler weather conditions are:

Equipment:

- Under-armor under a uniform can help to wicker sweat away from the skin surface to keep you dry and warm while playing.
- If your bat, glove or shoes need to be replaced due so before your regular season begins so you can get accustomed to them.
- Make sure to bring a change of clothes for after a game or practice to prevent sitting in wet cold clothing on the drive home. It's easier to catch a chill and become sick in colder temperatures as well as after a workout due to the fact that the immune system (system that works hard to keep you from getting sick) is suppress for 4 hours after a hard workout making you more venerable to catching a cold.

Conditioning:

- Condition is best worked on in the off season to enhance a players batting speed, agility, striking power and throwing velocity. This being said players should also be encouraged to be on a modified program for the in season to maintain the gains they made in the off season. Specific exercises should be adopted into a baseball training program to significantly reduce the risk of overuse damage especially to the shoulder joint.

Surface:

- Check the field prior to a game or practice to make sure the playing surface is safe and free from debree.
- injuries to the ankle and knee joints are more prevalent wet conditions due to the foot catching in the mud.

Warm up:

- The better shape you are in, the longer it will take you to elevate your core temperature – warm up. A good warm up should last anywhere from as little as 5min to as long as 15 – 20min (until the player begins to sweat and muscle become warm) and should include both a dynamic warm up and dynamic stretching. Some examples of a dynamic warm up are: light jogging, high knees, kick backs, jumping jacks . While dynamic stretching would include: walking lunges, one leg hamstring toe touch stretch, standing hugging knee to chest. Each dynamic stretch should be held without any bouncing for 3 – 5 seconds and should be done over a stretch of 30 yards.

