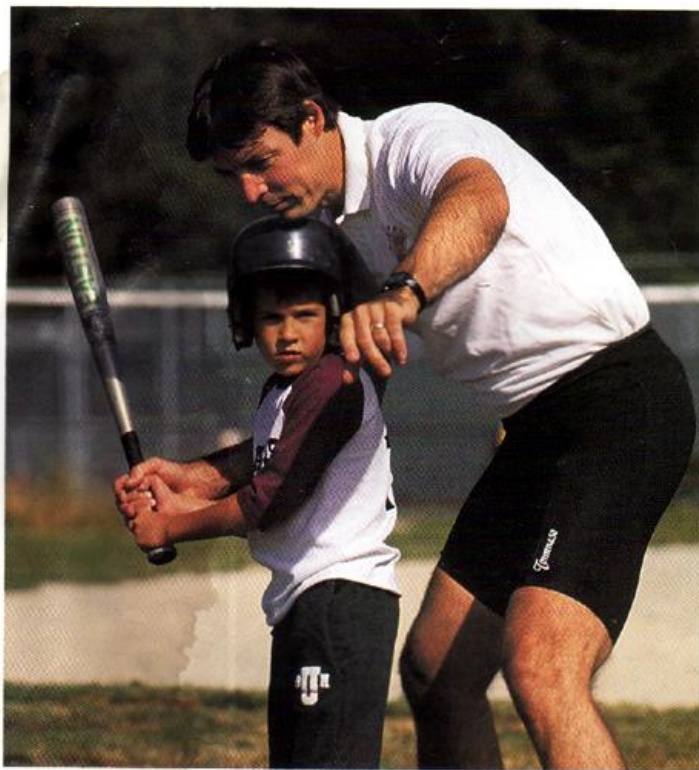


Avoiding Common Summer

The days are longer, the weather is warmer, and it's time to be outside and have fun. It is likely that we will resume activities from last summer. In our enthusiasm, it is easy to forget the most important elements of participating in a sport or exercise: preconditioning and warming up. "After taking off three quarters of the year from a sport, many people forget certain techniques such as how to slide into a base in baseball," says Orthopedist Warren King, M.D. "The body should be retrained, and you need practice before you go out and play games." Dr. King and Orthopedist Arthur Ting, M.D., are team physicians for the San Jose Sharks, San Francisco Giants, San Francisco Blackhawks and other professional and college athletic teams.

The most common sports-related injuries seen in the summer by orthopedists include ankle sprains; forearm, wrist and elbow injuries from falling; pulled hamstring and quadriceps muscles; twisted knees and shoulder injuries from overhead racquet sports. Says Orthopedist John Nelligan, M.D., who has an office in Redwood City, "Individuals who jump into a sport with great gusto and without a regular program of physical conditioning are more likely to hurt themselves. It is important to be judicious and build up slowly in order to enjoy the benefits of the sport. Individuals who hurt themselves are not only being deprived of the



DR. WARREN KING SHOWS HIS SON MATTHEW, AGE 7, A PROPER SWING.

sport; they can be worse off if the injury costs them money and time off from work."

He adds, "Individuals who were successful at a sport at a young age often expect that, even after a few years off from a sport, they can return to full participation within a week. This is due in part to our busy Bay Area lifestyle; we do not allow ourselves the time to build up endurance and condition ourselves, and we rarely allow enough time to stretch and warm up the muscles and joints. A portion of exercise time should always be reserved for stretching before the activity as well as after the warm-up or following completion of the activity. Initially, it is also a good idea to perform the sport at a 30 to 50 percent intensity level until you build up a sweat. Later, you can bring up your intensity to 100 percent."

Orthopedists urge individuals returning to a sport to be realistic about their bodies and to recognize that each individual has his or her own activity level and frequency tolerance.



DR. JOHN THOMAS NELLIGAN, HERE WITH SON JOHN PATRICK, ADVISES PEOPLE TO SLOWLY BUILD UP TO ACTIVITY.