Foreword

I can think of few textbooks more timely in the field of sports medicine than the following on elbow ulnar collateral ligament injuries. Not only has the 2014 baseball season seen an alarming increase in the number of these injuries but it was also prior to the 2014 season during which two of the forefathers of baseball medicine passed away: Dr. Frank Jobe and Dr. Lewis Yocum.

I can think of no better tribute to these men than this book which features chapters written by many of their former students, fellows, and colleagues. David and Josh, the editors, have assembled all of the current thought leaders in the field to address the topic of ulnar collateral ligament (UCL) injury in a more thorough way than has been done before. Not only does the monograph cover the basics like exam and imaging of the elbow in a thorough and readable way but it also tackles complicated topics such as revision UCL reconstruction and UCL reconstruction in high school athletes. Furthermore, there is an outstanding section on nonoperative treatment as well as postoperative rehabilitation, which will surely be of interest to surgeons and non-surgeons alike.

As UCL injuries continue to be more common, I am confident that this book will find its way on to the shelves of all doctors, therapists and trainers who treat these injuries.

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Since the initial description of elbow ulnar collateral ligament reconstruction by Dr. Frank Jobe, the use of the procedure to save the careers of baseball players (and other athletes) at all levels of play has increased exponentially. Over the last decade, our understanding of the biomechanics of throwing has improved, as has our ability to diagnose injuries in these athletes. Given these advances, we believed that a monograph dedicated to the diagnosis and treatment of injuries of the UCL would be of interest to the doctors, therapists and trainers who work with athletes that suffer these injuries.

We have assembled a world-class group of authors to review the biomechanics and pathophysiology of throwing injuries. Keys to performing a physical exam in this unique group of patients are highlighted in the text as are pearls to interpreting imaging studies.

Since Dr. Jobe’s initial description of the technique that he used to reconstruct pitcher Tommy John’s ligament, several modifications have been described. All currently-used techniques are illustrated here with both pictures and video. Outcomes are discussed in detail as they pertain to individual reconstruction constructs as well as to particular sports.

As anyone who treats these injuries knows, proper rehabilitation is critical to getting athletes back to their previous level of play. In this book, experts outline appropriate rehabilitation protocols and timelines.

We hope that this monograph helps readers gain a better understanding of UCL injuries with the goal of not only improving outcomes after UCL reconstruction but also preventing these injuries.

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