

## “Plyometrics” It’s More than Just Box Jumps

By: Jameson Parker, ATC

You have seen the guy in the weight room jumping up and down onto boxes and wondered, “what is that guy doing?” He was engaged in one form of plyometric exercise. Plyometric exercises combine speed and explosive movement to increase power. Box jumps are usually what people think of when they hear about plyometrics. However, plyometric exercises can be used to increase power in not only the lower body but the upper body as well, and both should be included when designing your off-season workout.

Lower extremity plyometrics are essential in the seasonal workout of any sport and will help increase power output. Lower extremity plyometrics are very important because all sports require repetitive motion such as explosive starts, kicking, jumping, and turning. Plyometric exercises can start small with double and single leg jumps in small X patterns or in straight lines, and then progress to harder and more endurance focused drills. Single and double leg box jumps, squat jumps, and single and double leg lateral jumps are just a few that can be done. The intensity can be further increased by the addition of throwing and catching a ball.

Upper extremity plyometrics are also important and can help increase power while throwing a ball, swinging a bat, or spiking a volleyball. Upper extremity plyometrics can also be used to strengthen your core. Having a strong core gives you a good base when performing any athletic activity. Most of the upper extremity plyometrics require the use of a medicine ball and range from chest passes and trunk twists. Some examples of upper extremity plyometric exercises are; two and one handed chest, overhead, and side throws with a medicine ball, sit-ups, sit-ups with a throw, and back extensions all done with a medicine ball.

Remember when you go to make your seasonal workout be sure to include plyometric exercises and show your power. If you have any questions or need help creating a program contact your high school athletic trainer or contact Southeastern Physical Therapy.