BACKGROUND
- Research has documented that as many as 10% of active Major League Baseball pitchers have undergone UCL reconstruction, and there has been an estimated 10-fold increase in reconstruction in the first decade of the 21st century.
- Despite an increase in the prevalence of medial ulnar collateral ligament (UCL) reconstruction within the media, there have no population-based studies examining the incidence of UCL reconstruction.
- Furthermore, concomitant ulnar nerve management during UCL reconstruction of the elbow remains somewhat controversial.

The primary purpose was to examine the epidemiology of trends of UCL reconstruction on a statewide level over a 10-year period.
- The secondary purpose was to examine the rate of concomitant ulnar nerve procedures performed at the time of UCL reconstruction.

MATERIALS & METHODS
- The New York Statewide Planning and Research Cooperative System (SPARCS) database was used to identify all UCL reconstructions in New York State (NYS) from 2002–2011 using CPT codes.
- Patient age, sex, ethnicity, insurance, associated procedures and hospital volume were recorded.
- The primary endpoint was the yearly rate of UCL reconstruction over time in NYS, and secondary endpoints included patient demographics, institution volumes and concomitant ulnar nerve procedures.

RESULTS
- There was a significant yearly increase in the number of UCL reconstructions (p<0.001) performed in NYS from 2002 to 2011.
- The volume of UCL reconstructions increased by 193% and the rate per 100,000 population tripled from 0.15 to 0.45.
- The mean age was 21.6 years (SD ± 8.89) and there was a significant trend for an increased frequency in UCL reconstruction in 17-18 and 19-20 year-olds (p<0.001).

DISCUSSION
- The frequency of UCL reconstruction in NYS is steadily rising, especially in adolescent athletes.
- Despite previous research showing decreased ulnar nerve complications with avoidance of routine ulnar nerve transposition, the present data showed a disproportionate increase in ulnar nerve procedures.
- Education on risks of overuse throwing injuries and the importance of adhering to preventative guidelines is essential in youth baseball today.