

# PARENT & ATHLETE CARDIAC ARREST INFORMATION



## WHAT IS SUDDEN CARDIAC ARREST?

Sudden Cardiac Arrest (SCA) is the sudden onset of an abnormal and lethal heart rhythm which causes the heart to stop beating and the individual to collapse.

SCA is the leading cause of death in the U.S. and is the most common medical cause of death in athletes, often occurring during physical activity such as playing a sport.

## WHAT CAUSES SUDDEN CARDIAC ARREST?

SCA in young athletes usually occurs because of a malfunction in the heart's electrical system or structure. Many of these conditions are genetic and can develop as an adolescent or young adult.

SCA is more likely during exercise or physical activity, placing young athletes with undiagnosed heart conditions at greater risk.

SCA can also occur as a result of a direct blow to the chest by a firm projectile (e.g. baseball, softball) or by chest contact from another player.

## WARNING SIGNS AND RISK FACTORS

While a heart condition may have no warning signs, some young athletes may have symptoms but they go unrecognized, unreported, missed, or misdiagnosed.

### POTENTIAL INDICATORS THAT SCA MAY OCCUR

- Fainting or seizure, especially during or right after exercise
- Chest pain or discomfort during exercise
- Excessive shortness of breath with exercise
- Racing or fluttering heart palpitations or irregular heartbeat
- Repeated dizziness or lightheadedness
- Excessive, unexpected fatigue during or after exercise

### FACTORS INCREASING RISK

- Family history of known heart abnormalities or sudden death before the age of 50
- Specific family history of Long QT Syndrome, Brugada Syndrome, Hypertrophic Cardiomyopathy, or Arrhythmogenic Right Ventricular Dysplasia (ARVD)
- Family members with known unexplained fainting, seizures, drowning or near drowning, or car accidents
- Family member with known structural heart abnormality, repaired or unrepaired
- Use of drugs such as cocaine, inhalants, "recreational" drugs, excessive energy drinks, diet pills or performance-enhancing supplements

## WHAT SHOULD BE DONE IF AN ATHLETE EXPERIENCES ANY SUDDEN CARDIAC ARREST WARNING SIGNS

1. Athlete should alert an adult.
2. Follow up care with a physician should be obtained as soon as possible.
3. Athletes must be evaluated and cleared by a physician in order to return to play.



### IN EVENT OF A CARDIAC EMERGENCY

#### 1) RECOGNIZE SUDDEN CARDIAC ARREST

- ✓ Collapsed and unresponsive
- ✓ Abnormal breathing
- ✓ Seizure-like activity

#### 2) CALL 9-1-1

- ✓ Follow emergency dispatcher's instructions
- ✓ Call any on-site Emergency Responders

#### 3) HANDS-ONLY CPR

- ✓ Begin chest compressions immediately
- ✓ Push hard / push fast (about 100 / minute)

#### 4) AED (defibrillation)

- ✓ Use AED as soon as possible.

#### 5) CONTINUE CARE

- ✓ Continue CPR and AED until EMS arrives.

TO LEARN MORE, GO TO >> [KeepTheirHeartInTheGame.org](http://KeepTheirHeartInTheGame.org)

ATHLETE NAME PRINTED

ATHLETE SIGNATURE

DATE

PARENT/GUARDIAN NAME PRINTED

PARENT/GUARDIAN SIGNATURE

DATE