

**CONCUSSION and SUDDEN CARDIAC ARREST
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT AND SIGNATURE FORM
FOR PARENTS AND STUDENT ATHLETES**

Student Athlete's Name (Please Print): _____

Sport Participating In (If Known): _____ Date: _____

IC 20-34-7 and IC 20-34-8 require schools to distribute information sheets to inform and educate student athletes and their parents on the nature and risk of concussion, head injury and sudden cardiac arrest to student athletes, including the risks of continuing to play after concussion or head injury. These laws require that each year, before beginning practice for an interscholastic or intramural sport, a student athlete and the student athlete's parents must be given an information sheet, and both must sign and return a form acknowledging receipt of the information to the student athlete's coach.

IC 20-34-7 states that a high school athlete who is suspected of sustaining a concussion or head injury in a practice or game, shall be removed from play at the time of injury and may not return to play until the student athlete has received a written clearance from a licensed health care provider trained in the evaluation and management of concussions and head injuries.

IC 20-34-8 states that a student athlete who is suspected of experiencing symptoms of sudden cardiac arrest shall be removed from play and may not return to play until the coach has received verbal permission from a parent or legal guardian of the student athlete to return to play. Within twenty-four hours, this verbal permission must be replaced by a written statement from the parent or guardian.

Parent/Guardian - please read the attached fact sheets regarding concussion and sudden cardiac arrest and ensure that your student athlete has also received and read these fact sheets. After reading these fact sheets, please ensure that you and your student athlete sign this form, and have your student athlete return this form to his/her coach.

As a student athlete, I have received and read both of the fact sheets regarding concussion and sudden cardiac arrest. I understand the nature and risk of concussion and head injury to student athletes, including the risks of continuing to play after concussion or head injury, and the symptoms of sudden cardiac arrest.

(Signature of Student Athlete)

(Date)

I, as the parent or legal guardian of the above named student, have received and read both of the fact sheets regarding concussion and sudden cardiac arrest. I understand the nature and risk of concussion and head injury to student athletes, including the risks of continuing to play after concussion or head injury, and the symptoms of sudden cardiac arrest.

(Signature of Parent or Guardian)

(Date)

SUDDEN CARDIAC ARREST

A Fact Sheet for Parents

FACTS

Sudden cardiac arrest is a rare, but tragic event that claims the lives of approximately 500 athletes each year in the United States. Sudden cardiac arrest can affect all levels of athletes, in all sports, and in all age levels. The majority of cardiac arrests are due to congenital (inherited) heart defects. However, sudden cardiac arrest can also occur after a person experiences an illness which has caused an inflammation to the heart or after a direct blow to the chest.

WARNING SIGNS

There may not be any noticeable symptoms before a person experiences loss of consciousness and a full cardiac arrest (no pulse and no breathing).

Warning signs can include a complaint of:

- Chest Discomfort
- Unusual Shortness of Breath
- Racing or Irregular Heartbeat
- Fainting or Passing Out

EMERGENCY SIGNS – Call EMS (911)

If a person experiences any of the following signs, call EMS (911) immediately:

- *If an athlete collapses suddenly during competition*
- *If a blow to the chest from a ball, puck or another player precedes an athlete's complaints of any of the warning signs of sudden cardiac arrest*
- *If an athlete does not look or feel right and you are just not sure*

How can I help my child prevent a sudden cardiac arrest?

Daily physical activity, proper nutrition, and adequate sleep are all important aspects of life-long health. Additionally, parents can assist student athletes prevent a sudden cardiac arrest by:

- Ensuring your child knows about any family history of sudden cardiac arrest (onset of heart disease in a family member before the age of 50 or a sudden, unexplained death at an early age)
- Ensuring your child has a thorough pre-season screening exam prior to participation in an organized athletic activity
- Asking if your school and the site of competition has an automatic defibrillator (AED) that is close by and properly maintained
- Learning CPR yourself
- Ensuring your child is not using any non-prescribed stimulants or performance enhancing drugs
- Being aware that the inappropriate use of prescription medications or energy drinks can increase risk
- Encouraging your child to be honest and report symptoms of chest discomfort, unusual shortness of breath, racing or irregular heartbeat, or feeling faint

What should I do if I think my child has warning signs that may lead to sudden cardiac arrest?

1. *Tell your child's coach about any previous events or family history*
2. *Keep your child out of play*
3. *Seek medical attention right away*

SUDDEN CARDIAC ARREST

A Fact Sheet for Student Athletes

FACTS

Sudden cardiac arrest can occur even in athletes who are in peak shape. Approximately 500 deaths are attributed to sudden cardiac arrest in athletes each year in the United States. Sudden cardiac arrest can affect all levels of athletes, in all sports, and in all age levels. The majority of cardiac arrests are due to congenital (inherited) heart defects. However, sudden cardiac arrest can also occur after a person experiences an illness which has caused an inflammation to the heart or after a direct blow to the chest. Once a cardiac arrest occurs, there is very little time to save the athlete, so identifying those at risk before the arrest occurs is a key factor in prevention.

WARNING SIGNS

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EMERGENCY SIGNS – Call EMS (911)

If a person experiences any of the following signs, call EMS (911) immediately:

- *If an athlete collapses suddenly during competition*
- *If a blow to the chest from a ball, puck or another player precedes an athlete's complaints of any of the warning signs of sudden cardiac arrest*
- *If an athlete does not look or feel right and you are just not sure*

How can I help prevent a sudden cardiac arrest?

Daily physical activity, proper nutrition, and adequate sleep are all important aspects of life-long health. Additionally, you can assist by:

- Knowing if you have a family history of sudden cardiac arrest (onset of heart disease in a family member before the age of 50 or a sudden, unexplained death at an early age)
- Telling your health care provider during your pre-season physical about any unusual symptoms of chest discomfort, shortness of breath, racing or irregular heartbeat, or feeling faint, especially if you feel these symptoms with physical activity
- Taking only prescription drugs that are prescribed to you by your health care provider
- Being aware that the inappropriate use of prescription medications or energy drinks can increase your risk
- Being honest and reporting symptoms of chest discomfort, unusual shortness of breath, racing or irregular heartbeat, or feeling faint

What should I do if I think I am developing warning signs that may lead to sudden cardiac arrest?

1. *Tell an adult – your parent or guardian, your coach, your athletic trainer or your school nurse*
2. *Get checked out by your health care provider*
3. *Take care of your heart*
4. *Remember that the most dangerous thing you can do is to do nothing*

SUDDEN CARDIAC ARREST

A Fact Sheet for Coaches

What should I do if I think a student athlete has warning signs that may lead to sudden cardiac arrest?

- 1. Keep the athlete out of play*
- 2. Inform the athlete's parent or guardian*
- 3. Document the athlete's symptoms, your response and your notification to parents or guardian*
- 4. Encourage the parent or guardian to seek medical attention right away*
- 5. Ensure the athlete does not return to play until the proper paperwork has been signed and returned by the parent or guardian*

What should I do if a student athlete exhibits the emergency signs of a sudden cardiac arrest?

- 1. Call 911*
- 2. If appropriate, begin CPR*
- 3. If available, utilize an AED*
- 4. Notify the athlete's parents or guardian*
- 5. Follow your school policy or your school Emergency Action Plan regarding the management of students with life-threatening symptoms*

What other factors should I be aware of?

Often, congenital heart defects are not obvious before an event occurs and sudden cardiac arrest can be the first symptom in some of these instances. Thus, reviewing the athlete's family history and ensuring a thorough pre-season evaluation by a health care provider is the key to preventing sudden cardiac arrest events.

Additionally,

- If an athlete suffers a sudden cardiac arrest, the athlete may not be able to protect themselves or "break their fall" and may sustain additional injuries
- During sudden cardiac arrest, the athlete may have jerking movements like a seizure
- Fainting during play or competition is a red flag and would require immediate medical attention

SUDDEN CARDIAC ARREST – FAQ DOCUMENT

(March 2015)

1. Where can I find a copy of the Sudden Cardiac Arrest Law?

The law is titled “Student Athletes: Sudden Cardiac Arrest”. It is listed under Indiana Code as IC 20-34-8 and can be found at the following site:

<http://iga.in.gov/legislative/laws/2014/ic/titles/020/articles/034/chapters/008/>

2. Are there sample forms that I could use regarding the implementation of this law?

Yes, sample forms have been developed by the Indiana Department of Education and can be found on the IDOE website at <http://www.doe.in.gov/student-services/health/sudden-cardiac-arrest>. Schools are not required to use these sample forms as they are simply provided for schools to use if they wish. Schools are welcome to develop and use their own forms as long as these forms meet the requirements of the law.

3. Would it be possible to combine the concussion educational forms with the sudden cardiac arrest educational forms?

Yes, the Concussion Law and the Sudden Cardiac Arrest Law have very similar educational requirements for parents and student athletes. IDOE has created one acknowledgement and signature form that combines both of these laws together. IDOE suggests that schools print the “Heads Up” Concussion Fact Sheet on one side of a paper and the Sudden Cardiac Arrest Fact Sheet on the other side. Schools may also post these fact sheets in an electronic format for parents and student athletes to read.

4. Does this law, in regards to the educational materials and the return to play requirements, apply to all students?

Yes, this law applies to all students who participate in an interscholastic or intramural sport, including competitive and noncompetitive cheerleading. It applies to all student athletes, in any grade level, who participate in an organized athletic activity.

5. What is the definition of an interscholastic sport?

An interscholastic sport is defined as one that is sanctioned by the Indiana High School Athletic Association (IHSAA). These include the following for boys: baseball, basketball, cross country, football, golf, soccer, swimming, tennis, track and wrestling; and for girls: basketball, cross country, golf, gymnastics, soccer, softball, swimming, tennis, track and volleyball.

6. What is the definition of an intramural sport?

IHSAA states “an intramural contest occurs when all participants on both teams are members of one school”.

7. How does the Sudden Cardiac Arrest Law define “athletic activity”?

The SCA Law defines “athletic activity” as the following:

- an athletic contest or competition conducted between or among schools
- an intramural athletic contest or competition that is sponsored by or associated with a school
- competitive and noncompetitive cheerleading that is sponsored by or associated with a school

8. With regard to the SCA Law, what other types of teams could be considered as an intramural sport?

Any team, comprised of student athletes, that is considered a “school-sponsored” team or whose coach is paid, compensated or officially recognized by the school administrator would be considered as an intramural sport.

9. Is cheerleading considered an interscholastic or intramural sport?

Yes, the SCA Law specifically mentions and includes competitive and noncompetitive cheerleading. Additionally, in Indiana, cheerleading is considered an intramural sport and at the federal level cheerleading is recognized as an interscholastic sport by the National Federation of High School Sports.

10. Are club sports considered intramural sports?

Club sports would be considered as intramural sports if all the participants of both teams are members of one school, or if the coach of the club sport is paid, compensated or officially recognized by the school administrator.

11. What about other students who do not fall under the legal definitions of this law?

For a student athlete, of any age or sport, the recommendation would be for the adults in charge to take symptoms of sudden cardiac arrest seriously. If these symptoms are suspected for any student, the recommendation would be to remove the student from play, notify the student’s parents and recommend that the student be evaluated by a licensed health care provider before allowing the student to return to practice or game play.

12. Does a student athlete have to be evaluated by a licensed health care provider before being allowed to return to play?

No, the law requires that the parent or guardian must be notified and the student athlete may only return to play with verbal permission from the parent or guardian. Verbal permission must be replaced with written permission within 24 hours.

13. What should be done if the parent or guardian does not send written permission to the coach?

The student athlete should not be allowed to participate, practice or compete in an athletic activity until the parent has sent written permission to return to play to the school.

14. What should be done if the student athlete continues to exhibit signs or symptoms of sudden cardiac arrest after they have been returned to play upon written release by the parent?

The student athlete should be removed from play each time he/she exhibits symptoms of sudden cardiac arrest and should not be returned to play without a verbal and then a written follow-up release to play from the parents. Schools are encouraged to develop a school policy that addresses these procedures and describes what the school policy will be for students that exhibit these symptoms more than once. (For example, a school policy could state that a school will only accept two written return to play release notes from parents and if the student continues to exhibit signs and symptoms of sudden cardiac arrest, the parent written release would need to be replaced by a health care provider's written release.)

15. *Can an athletic trainer do an initial assessment of a student athlete that has symptoms suggestive of sudden cardiac arrest and release a student athlete to return to play?*

Yes, if a student athlete exhibits signs or symptoms of sudden cardiac arrest, the student may be assessed by an athletic trainer, if available. The athletic trainer can make a first assessment of the student athlete at the time of symptoms. If the student exhibits any of the emergency signs associated with sudden cardiac arrest, the student athlete should receive immediate medical attention.

If during this initial assessment, the student athlete does not exhibit any of the emergency signs associated with sudden cardiac arrest, but does exhibit any (even one) of the signs or symptoms of sudden cardiac arrest, sudden cardiac arrest should be suspected. At that time, the student athlete should be removed from play, the athlete's parents should be notified, and the athlete should not return to play until a parent or guardian's verbal permission has been obtained. The student athlete may not return to play until the parent or guardian's verbal permission has been replaced by a written release to return to play, even if the student athlete has been assessed by a health care professional.

An evaluation by a health care provider could be requested by the school, but a written release to play form must be completed by the parent or guardian in order for the student athlete to return to practice or competition.