

Sudden Cardiac Arrest

Information Sheet for

Student-Athletes, Coaches and Parents/Guardians

SSB 5083 ~ SCA Awareness Act



What is sudden cardiac arrest? Sudden Cardiac Arrest (SCA) is the sudden onset of an abnormal and lethal heart rhythm, causing the heart to stop beating and the individual to collapse. SCA is the leading cause of death in the U.S. afflicting over 300,000 individuals per year.

SCA is also the leading cause of sudden death in young athletes during sports

What causes sudden cardiac arrest? SCA in young athletes is usually caused by a structural or electrical disorder of the heart. Many of these conditions are inherited (genetic) and can develop as an adolescent or young adult. SCA is more likely during exercise or physical activity, placing student-athletes with undiagnosed heart conditions at greater risk. SCA also can occur from a direct blow to the chest by a firm projectile (baseball, softball, lacrosse ball, or hockey puck) or by chest contact from another player (called "commotio cordis").

While a heart condition may have no warning signs, some young athletes may have symptoms but neglect to tell an adult. If any of the following symptoms are present, a cardiac evaluation by a physician is recommended:

- Passing out during exercise
- Chest pain with exercise
- Excessive shortness of breath with exercise
- Palpitations (heart racing for no reason)
- Unexplained seizures
- A family member with early onset heart disease or sudden death from a heart condition before the age of 40

How to prevent and treat sudden cardiac arrest? Some heart conditions at risk for SCA can be detected by a thorough heart screening evaluation. However, all schools and teams should be prepared to respond to a cardiac emergency. Young athletes who suffer SCA are collapsed and unresponsive and may appear to have brief seizure-like activity or abnormal breathing (gaspings). SCA can be effectively treated by immediate recognition, prompt CPR, and quick access to a defibrillator (AED). AEDs are safe, portable devices that read and analyze the heart rhythm and provide an electric shock (if necessary) to restore a normal heart rhythm.

Remember, to save a life: recognize SCA, call 9-1-1, begin CPR, and use an AED as soon as possible!



Cardiac 3-Minute Drill

- 1. RECOGNIZE Sudden Cardiac Arrest**
 - Collapsed and unresponsive
 - Abnormal breathing
 - Seizure-like activity
- 2. CALL 9-1-1**
 - Call for help and for an AED
- 3. CPR**
 - Begin chest compressions
 - Push hard/ push fast (100 per minute)
- 4. AED**
 - Use AED as soon as possible
- 5. CONTINUE CARE**
 - Continue CPR and AED until EMS arrives



**Be Prepared!
Every Second Counts!**

Student Sports – Concussion, Head Injury and Sudden Cardiac Arrest - 3422

Concussion, Head Injury

The District recognizes that concussions and head injuries are commonly reported injuries in children and adolescents who participate in sports and other recreational activities. The District acknowledges the risk of catastrophic injuries or deaths are significant when a concussion or head injury is not properly evaluated and managed.

Therefore, all competitive sport activities in the district will be identified by the administration and all appropriate district staff, coaches and team volunteers will complete training as required in Procedure 3422 to recognize warning signs and symptoms of concussion and head injury. Additionally, all coaches will comply with Washington Interscholastic Activities Association (WIAA) guidelines for the management of concussions and head injuries.

Consistent with Washington State law, the District will utilize guidelines developed with the Washington Interscholastic Activities Association (WIAA) and other pertinent information and forms to inform and educate coaches, student athletes, and their parents and/or guardians of the nature and risk of concussions or head injuries, including the dangers associated with continuing to play after a concussion or head injury.

Annually, the district will distribute a head injury and concussion information sheet to all parents and guardians of student participants in competitive sport activities. The parent/guardian and student must return a signed acknowledgement indicating that they have reviewed and understand the information provided before the student participates in any covered activity. Until this acknowledgement form is returned and on file with the District, the student may not practice or compete.

All coaches of competitive sport activities will comply with WIAA guidelines for the management of head injuries and concussions.

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The District further recognizes that sudden cardiac arrest is reported to be the leading cause of death in young athletes. The board will work with the WIAA and the University of Washington medicine center for sports cardiology to make available an online pamphlet that provides student athletes, their parents/guardians and coaches with information about sudden cardiac arrest. To this end, the district will maintain a link on its website to the OSPI website where the online pamphlet will be posted.

Annually, prior to participating in an interscholastic athletic activity, students and their parent/guardian must review the online pamphlet and return a signed statement to the school documenting their review. This form may be combined with the annually distributed head injury and concussion information sheet referenced above.

The board will also work with the WIAA and the University of Washington medicine center for sports cardiology to make available an existing online sudden cardiac arrest prevention program for coaches. Every three years, prior to coaching an interscholastic athletic activity, all coaches will complete the online program and provide a certificate of completion to the district.

All coaches, including volunteers, will complete training as required in the district procedure. Additionally, all coaches will comply with Washington Interscholastic Activities Association (WIAA) guidelines for the management of sudden cardiac arrest.

Prior to their first use of school facilities, all private nonprofit youth programs must provide a written statement of compliance with this policy in regard to sudden cardiac arrest with proof of insurance as required by RCW 4.24.660.

Cross References: 3412 - Automated External Defibrillators
3418 - Response to Student Injury or Illness
4260 - Use of School Facilities

Legal References: RCW 4.24.660 Liability of school districts under contract with youth programs
Chapter 28A.600 RCW Students

Management Resources: 2015 - June Policy Issue
2014 - August Issue
2009 - August Issue

Management Resources: *Policy News*, August 2009 Concussion and Head Injuries Legislation