



# SUDDEN CARDIAC ARREST AWARENESS FORM

Revised 2018

## What is Sudden Cardiac Arrest?

- An electrical malfunction (short-circuit) causes the bottom chamber of the heart (ventricles) to beat dangerously fast (ventricular tachycardia or fibrillation) and disrupts the pumping ability of the heart.
- Occurs suddenly and often without warning
- The heart cannot pump blood to the brain, lungs and other organs of the body.
- The person loses consciousness (passes out) and has no pulse.
- Death occurs within minutes if not treated.

## What causes Sudden Cardiac Arrest?

- Conditions present at birth (inherited and non-inherited heart abnormalities)
- A blow to the chest (Commotio Cordis)
- An infection/inflammation of the heart, usually caused by a virus. (Myocarditis)
- Recreational/Performance-Enhancing drug use.
- Other cardiac & medical conditions/Unknown causes. (Obesity/Idiopathic)

## What are the symptoms/warning signs of Sudden Cardiac Arrest?

- Fainting/blackouts (especially during exercise)
- Dizziness
- Unusual fatigue/weakness
- Chest pain
- Shortness of breath
- Nausea/vomiting
- Palpitations (heart is beating unusually fast or skipping beats)
- Family history of sudden cardiac arrest at age < 50

**ANY of these symptoms/warning signs may necessitate further evaluation from your physician before returning to practice or a game.**

## What are ways to screen for Sudden Cardiac Arrest?

- The American Heart Association recommends a pre-participation history and physical including 12 important cardiac elements.
- **The DIAA Pre-Participation Physical Evaluation – Medical History form includes ALL 12 of these important cardiac elements and is mandatory annually. Please answer the heart history questions on the student health history section of the DIAA PPE carefully.**
- Additional screening using an electrocardiogram and/or an echocardiogram is readily available to all athletes, but is not mandatory.

## Where can one find additional information?

- Contact your primary care physician
- American Heart Association ([www.heart.org](http://www.heart.org))
- August Heart ([www.augustheart.org](http://www.augustheart.org))
- Championship Hearts Foundation ([www.championshipheartsfoundation.org](http://www.championshipheartsfoundation.org))
- Cypress ECG Project ([www.cypressecgproject.org](http://www.cypressecgproject.org))
- Parent Heart Watch ([www.parentheartwatch.com](http://www.parentheartwatch.com))