



## **Frequently Asked Questions regarding the Sudden Cardiac Arrest Prevention**

### **1. What is sudden cardiac arrest (SCA)?**

It is the sudden and unexpected loss of heart function. The heart stops beating, the student stops breathing and collapses. The student may be motionless or be convulsing (which looks like a seizure).

### **2. What causes sudden cardiac arrest?**

There are three main causes. First, there could be a defect in how the heart is built or how it works. Second, there could be an electrical defect that interrupts the normal rhythm of the heart. Finally, there are other causes, such as illicit or prescription drug use.

### **3. Are there warning signs or symptoms?**

Although SCA happens unexpectedly, some people may have signs or symptoms, such as:

- dizziness
- unexplained shortness of breath
- racing or fluttering heartbeat (palpitations)
- unexplained seizures
- fainting (syncope)
- fatigue (extreme tiredness)
- chest pains

These symptoms can be unclear and confusing in athletes. Often, people confuse these warning signs with physical exhaustion. SCA can be prevented if the underlying causes can be diagnosed and treated.

### **4. How can the conditions of Sudden Cardiac Arrest be detected?**

Physical Exam and Medical History. Prior to participating in athletics, students are required to get a physical and complete a medical history. This form asks questions about family history and heart conditions. The physical exam should include listening to the heart.

Heart Screening. An electrocardiogram (ECG) is an effective diagnostic tool that detects irregularities. An abnormal ECG exam can lead to other tests like an echocardiogram, stress test, halter monitor and more.

### **5. Which students and parents or guardians need sudden cardiac arrest education and how often?**

All students participating in or desiring to participate in an athletic activity and the student's parent or guardian shall each school year, prior to participation sign and return an acknowledgement of receipt and review of an Athlete/Parent/Guardian Sudden Cardiac Arrest Symptoms and Warning Signs Information Sheet and Acknowledgement of Receipt and Review Form. Athletic activity includes: 1) interscholastic athletics, 2) An athletic contest or competition, other than interscholastic athletics, that is sponsored by or associated with a school entity, including cheerleading, club-sponsored sports activities and sports activities sponsored by school-affiliated organizations, 3) Noncompetitive

cheerleading that is sponsored by or associated with a school entity, 4) Practices, interschool practices and scrimmages for all of the activities listed above.

**6. Is there a sample Athlete/Parent/Guardian Sudden Cardiac Arrest Symptoms and Warning Signs Information Sheet and Acknowledgement of Receipt and Review Form?**

The Save a Life Foundation working with the CIF has developed a sample Athlete/Parent/Guardian Sudden Cardiac Arrest Symptoms and Warning Signs Information Sheet and Acknowledgement of Receipt and Review Form. It is available under Resources on the SCA page of the Sports Medicine portion of the CIF State website titled: SCA Parent/Student Review Form.

**7. Who offers sudden cardiac arrest prevention training? Who can take the training? Will there be a charge to take the training?**

Anyone can take the online training free of charge – click on this link:

<http://www.proprofs.com/training/course/?title=training-for-sca-prevention-act-ca>

**8. How often should I take the free training?**

The medical science continues to make great advances and everyone should take the training yearly to ensure they are following the most up to date and best practices provided by the medical experts

**9. How long is the online training?**

Approx. 15 minutes online. A certificate of completion is provided at the end.

**10. Who should determine if a student has experienced one or more sign(s) or symptom(s) prior to, during or following an athletic activity?**

Anyone, from a game official, coach from the student's team, licensed athletic trainer, licensed physician, parents and teammates should tell the coach when they see a student experiencing any signs and/or symptoms; immediately remove the athlete from a game. The athlete should not return to play until an appropriate medical professional has determined that it is safe and there are no cardiac related issues.