

This form should be maintained by the healthcare provider completing the physical exam (medical home). It should not be shared with schools. The medical eligibility form is the only form that should be submitted to a school. The physical exam must be completed by a healthcare provider who is a licensed physician, advanced practice nurse or physician assistant who has completed the Student-Athlete Cardiac Assessment Professional Development module hosted by the New Jersey Department of Education.

## ■ PREPARTICIPATION PHYSICAL EVALUATION (Interim Guidance)

### HISTORY FORM

Note: Complete and sign this form (with your parents if younger than 18) before your appointment.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of birth: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of examination: \_\_\_\_\_ Sport(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Sex assigned at birth (F, M, or intersex): \_\_\_\_\_ How do you identify your gender? (F, M, non-binary, or another gender): \_\_\_\_\_

Have you had COVID-19? (check one):  Y  N

Have you been immunized for COVID-19? (check one):  Y  N If yes, have you had:  One shot  Two shots  
 Three shots  Booster date(s) \_\_\_\_\_

List past and current medical conditions. \_\_\_\_\_

Have you ever had surgery? If yes, list all past surgical procedures. \_\_\_\_\_

Medicines and supplements: List all current prescriptions, over-the-counter medicines, and supplements (herbal and nutritional).  
 \_\_\_\_\_

Do you have any allergies? If yes, please list all your allergies (ie, medicines, pollens, food, stinging insects).  
 \_\_\_\_\_

#### Patient Health Questionnaire Version 4 (PHQ-4)

Over the last 2 weeks, how often have you been bothered by any of the following problems? (Circle response.)

	Not at all	Several days	Over half the days	Nearly every day
Feeling nervous, anxious, or on edge	0	1	2	3
Not being able to stop or control worrying	0	1	2	3
Little interest or pleasure in doing things	0	1	2	3
Feeling down, depressed, or hopeless	0	1	2	3

(A sum of  $\geq 3$  is considered positive on either subscale [questions 1 and 2, or questions 3 and 4] for screening purposes.)

GENERAL QUESTIONS (Explain "Yes" answers at the end of this form. Circle questions if you don't know the answer.)	Yes	No
1. Do you have any concerns that you would like to discuss with your provider?		
2. Has a provider ever denied or restricted your participation in sports for any reason?		
3. Do you have any ongoing medical issues or recent illness?		
HEART HEALTH QUESTIONS ABOUT YOU	Yes	No
4. Have you ever passed out or nearly passed out during or after exercise?		
5. Have you ever had discomfort, pain, tightness, or pressure in your chest during exercise?		
6. Does your heart ever race, flutter in your chest, or skip beats (irregular beats) during exercise?		
7. Has a doctor ever told you that you have any heart problems?		
8. Has a doctor ever requested a test for your heart? For example, electrocardiography (ECG) or echocardiography.		

HEART HEALTH QUESTIONS ABOUT YOU (CONTINUED)	Yes	No	
9. Do you get light-headed or feel shorter of breath than your friends during exercise?			
10. Have you ever had a seizure?			
HEART HEALTH QUESTIONS ABOUT YOUR FAMILY	Unsure	Yes	No
11. Has any family member or relative died of heart problems or had an unexpected or unexplained sudden death before age 35 years (including drowning or unexplained car crash)?			
12. Does anyone in your family have a genetic heart problem such as hypertrophic cardiomyopathy (HCM), Marfan syndrome, arrhythmogenic right ventricular cardiomyopathy (ARVC), long QT syndrome (LQTS), short QT syndrome (SQTS), Brugada syndrome, or catecholaminergic polymorphic ventricular tachycardia (CPVT)?			
13. Has anyone in your family had a pacemaker or an implanted defibrillator before age 35?			



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**■ PREPARTICIPATION PHYSICAL EVALUATION**

**ATHLETES WITH DISABILITIES FORM: SUPPLEMENT TO THE ATHLETE HISTORY**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of birth: \_\_\_\_\_

1. Type of disability:		
2. Date of disability:		
3. Classification (if available):		
4. Cause of disability (birth, disease, injury, or other):		
5. List the sports you are playing:		
	Yes	No
6. Do you regularly use a brace, an assistive device, or a prosthetic device for daily activities?		
7. Do you use any special brace or assistive device for sports?		
8. Do you have any rashes, pressure sores, or other skin problems?		
9. Do you have a hearing loss? Do you use a hearing aid?		
10. Do you have a visual impairment?		
11. Do you use any special devices for bowel or bladder function?		
12. Do you have burning or discomfort when urinating?		
13. Have you had autonomic dysreflexia?		
14. Have you ever been diagnosed as having a heat-related (hyperthermia) or cold-related (hypothermia) illness?		
15. Do you have muscle spasticity?		
16. Do you have frequent seizures that cannot be controlled by medication?		

Explain "Yes" answers here.

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Please indicate whether you have ever had any of the following conditions:

	Yes	No
Atlantoaxial instability		
Radiographic (x-ray) evaluation for atlantoaxial instability		
Dislocated joints (more than one)		
Easy bleeding		
Enlarged spleen		
Hepatitis		
Osteopenia or osteoporosis		
Difficulty controlling bowel		
Difficulty controlling bladder		
Numbness or tingling in arms or hands		
Numbness or tingling in legs or feet		
Weakness in arms or hands		
Weakness in legs or feet		
Recent change in coordination		
Recent change in ability to walk		
Spina bifida		
Latex allergy		

Explain "Yes" answers here.

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I hereby state that, to the best of my knowledge, my answers to the questions on this form are complete and correct.

Signature of athlete: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of parent or guardian: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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## ■ PREPARTICIPATION PHYSICAL EVALUATION (Interim Guidance) PHYSICAL EXAMINATION FORM

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of birth: \_\_\_\_\_

### PHYSICIAN REMINDERS

- Consider additional questions on more-sensitive issues.
  - Do you feel stressed out or under a lot of pressure?
  - Do you ever feel sad, hopeless, depressed, or anxious?
  - Do you feel safe at your home or residence?
  - Have you ever tried cigarettes, e-cigarettes, chewing tobacco, snuff, or dip?
  - During the past 30 days, did you use chewing tobacco, snuff, or dip?
  - Do you drink alcohol or use any other drugs?
  - Have you ever taken anabolic steroids or used any other performance-enhancing supplement?
  - Have you ever taken any supplements to help you gain or lose weight or improve your performance?
  - Do you wear a seat belt, use a helmet, and use condoms?
- Consider reviewing questions on cardiovascular symptoms (Q4–Q13 of History Form).

EXAMINATION		
Height:	Weight:	
BP: / ( / )	Pulse:	Vision: R 20/ L 20/ Corrected: <input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N
COVID-19 VACCINE		
Previously received COVID-19 vaccine: <input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N		
Administered COVID-19 vaccine at this visit: <input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N If yes: <input type="checkbox"/> First dose <input type="checkbox"/> Second dose <input type="checkbox"/> Third dose <input type="checkbox"/> Booster date(s) _____		
MEDICAL	NORMAL	ABNORMAL FINDINGS
Appearance <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Marfan stigmata (kyphoscoliosis, high-arched palate, pectus excavatum, arachnodactyly, hyperlaxity, myopia, mitral valve prolapse [MVP], and aortic insufficiency)</li> </ul>		
Eyes, ears, nose, and throat <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pupils equal</li> <li>Hearing</li> </ul>		
Lymph nodes		
Heart <sup>a</sup> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Murmurs (auscultation standing, auscultation supine, and ± Valsalva maneuver)</li> </ul>		
Lungs		
Abdomen		
Skin <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Herpes simplex virus (HSV), lesions suggestive of methicillin-resistant <i>Staphylococcus aureus</i> (MRSA), or tinea corporis</li> </ul>		
Neurological		
MUSCULOSKELETAL	NORMAL	ABNORMAL FINDINGS
Neck		
Back		
Shoulder and arm		
Elbow and forearm		
Wrist, hand, and fingers		
Hip and thigh		
Knee		
Leg and ankle		
Foot and toes		
Functional <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Double-leg squat test, single-leg squat test, and box drop or step drop test</li> </ul>		

<sup>a</sup> Consider electrocardiography (ECG), echocardiography, referral to a cardiologist for abnormal cardiac history or examination findings, or a combination of those.

Name of health care professional (print or type): \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of health care professional: \_\_\_\_\_, MD, DO, NP, or PA

## Preparticipation Physical Evaluation Medical Eligibility Form

The Medical Eligibility Form is the only form that should be submitted to school. It should be kept on file with the student's school health record.

Student Athlete's Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Exam \_\_\_\_\_

- Medically eligible for all sports without restriction
- Medically eligible for all sports without restriction with recommendations for further evaluation or treatment of
- Medically eligible for certain sports
- Not medically eligible pending further evaluation
- Not medically eligible for any sports

Recommendations: \_\_\_\_\_

I have reviewed the history form and examined the student named on this form and completed the preparticipation physical evaluation. The athlete does not have apparent clinical contraindications to practice and can participate in the sport(s) as outlined on this form. A copy of the physical examination findings- are on record in my office and can be made available to the school at the request of the parents. If conditions arise after the athlete has been cleared for participation, the physician may rescind the medical eligibility until the problem is resolved and the potential consequences are completely explained to the athlete (and parents or guardians).

Signature of physician, APN, PA \_\_\_\_\_

Office stamp (optional)

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of healthcare professional (print) \_\_\_\_\_

I certify I have completed the Cardiac Assessment Professional Development Module developed by the New Jersey Department of Education.

Signature of healthcare provider \_\_\_\_\_

### Shared Health Information

Allergies \_\_\_\_\_

Medications:


Other information: \_\_\_\_\_

Emergency Contacts: \_\_\_\_\_

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*\*This form has been modified to meet the statutes set forth by New Jersey.*



## **Sports-Related Concussion and Head Injury Fact Sheet and Parent/Guardian Acknowledgement Form**

A concussion is a traumatic brain injury that can be caused by a blow to the head or body that disrupts the normal functioning of the brain. This sudden movement can cause the brain to bounce around or twist in the skull, creating chemical changes in the brain and sometimes stretching and damaging brain cells, disrupting the way the brain normally functions. Concussions can cause significant and sustained neuropsychological impairment affecting balance, reading (tracking), problem solving, planning, memory, attention, concentration, and behavior. Concussions can range from mild to severe. Having a concussion increases the risk of sustaining another concussion. Second-impact syndrome may occur when a person sustains a second concussion while still experiencing symptoms of a previous concussion. It can lead to severe impairment and even death.

### **Requirements addressing sports-related concussions and head injuries for student athletes and cheerleaders**

- All school districts, charter, and non-public schools that participate in interscholastic sports are required to distribute this educational fact to all student athletes and cheerleaders and obtain a signed acknowledgment from each parent/guardian and student-athlete.
- Each school district, charter, and non-public school shall develop a written policy describing the prevention and treatment of sports-related concussion and other head injuries sustained by interscholastic student-athletes and cheerleaders.
- Any cheerleader or student-athlete who participates in an interscholastic sports program and is suspected of sustaining a concussion will be immediately removed from competition or practice. The student-athlete will not be allowed to return to competition or practice until they have written clearance from a physician trained in concussion treatment and have completed his/her district's graduated return-to-play protocol.

### **Quick Facts**

- Most concussions do not involve loss of consciousness.
- You can sustain a concussion even if you do not hit your head.
- A blow elsewhere on the body can transmit an "impulsive" force to the brain and cause a concussion.
- Signs and symptoms of concussion can show up right after an injury or may not appear or be noticed until hours or days after the injury.

### **Signs of Concussions (Observed by Coach, Athletic Trainer, Parent/Guardian/Caregiver, Teammate, and others)**

- Appears dazed or stunned
- Forgets plays or demonstrates short term memory difficulties (e.g., unsure of game, opponent)
- Exhibits difficulties with balance, coordination, concentration, and attention

- Answers questions slowly or inaccurately
- Is unable to recall events prior to or after the hit or fall

### **Symptoms of Concussion (Reported by Student-Athlete)**

- Headache
- Nausea/vomiting
- Balance problems or dizziness
- Double vision or changes in vision - trouble reading
- Sensitivity to light/sound
- Feeling of sluggishness or fogginess - fatigue
- Difficulty with concentration, short term memory, and/or confusion

### **Dangerous Signs & Symptoms of a Concussion**

- New onset of symptoms
- One pupil is larger than the other
- Drowsiness or inability to wake up
- A headache that gets worse and does not go away
- Slurred speech, weakness, numbness, or decreased coordination
- Repeated vomiting, nausea, or seizures (shaking or twitching)
- Unusual behavior, increased confusion, restlessness, or agitation
- Loss of consciousness (passed out/knocked out); even a brief loss of consciousness should be taken seriously.

### **What should a student-athlete do if they think they have a concussion?**

- Do not hide it. Tell your athletic trainer, coach, school nurse, or parent/guardian.
- Report it. Do not return to competition or practice with symptoms of a concussion or head injury.
- Take time to recover. If you have a concussion, your brain needs time to heal. While your brain is healing you are much more likely to sustain a second concussion.

### **What can happen if a student-athlete continues to play with a concussion or returns to play too soon?**

- Continuing to play with the signs and symptoms of a concussion leaves the student-athlete vulnerable to second impact syndrome.
- Second impact syndrome is when a student-athlete sustains a second concussion while still having symptoms from a previous concussion or head injury.
- Second impact syndrome can lead to severe impairment and even death in extreme cases.

### **Should there be any temporary academic accommodation made for student-athletes who have suffered a concussion?**

- Most students will only need help through informal, academic adjustments as they recover from a concussion.
- Students may need to take rest breaks, spend fewer hours at school, be given extra time to complete assignments, as well as being offered other instructional strategies and classroom accommodations
- Contact the school nurse if symptoms persist to discuss whether additional accommodations are

necessary.

- To recover, cognitive rest is just as important as physical rest. Reading, texting, computer use and even watching movies can slow down recovery. Limit screen time during recovery.

**Students who have sustained a concussion may not return to practice or competition until they receive written clearance from a physician trained in the evaluation and management of concussion and complete the graduated [Six-step return to play protocol outlined by the CDC](#):**

**Step 1: Back to regular activities (such as school)**

Athletes or cheerleaders are back to their regular activities (such as school).

**Step 2: Light aerobic activity**

Begin with light aerobic exercise only to increase an athlete's heart rate. This means about 5 to 10 minutes on an exercise bike, walking, or light jogging. No weightlifting at this point.

**Step 3: Moderate activity**

Continue with activities to increase an athlete's heart rate with body or head movement. This includes moderate jogging, brief running, moderate-intensity stationary biking, moderate-intensity weightlifting (less time and/or less weight from their typical routine).

**Step 4: Heavy, non-contact activity**

Add heavy non-contact physical activity, such as sprinting/running, high-intensity stationary biking, regular weightlifting routine, non-contact sport-specific drills (in 3 planes of movement).

**Step 5: Practice & full contact**

Athletes may return to practice and full contact (if appropriate for the sport) in controlled practice.

**Step 6: Competition**

Young athletes may return to competition.

For further information on Sports-Related Concussions and other Head Injuries, please visit:

- [CDC Heads Up](#)
- [Keeping Heads Healthy](#)

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Student athlete's name (print)

Student athlete's signature

Date

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Parent / Guardian name (print)

Parent / Guardian signature

Date



# OPIOID USE AND MISUSE EDUCATIONAL FACT SHEET

## Keeping Student-Athletes Safe

School athletics can serve an integral role in students' development. In addition to providing healthy forms of exercise, school athletics foster friendships and camaraderie, promote sportsmanship and fair play, and instill the value of competition.

Unfortunately, sports activities may also lead to injury and, in rare cases, result in pain that is severe or long-lasting enough to require a prescription opioid painkiller.<sup>1</sup> It is important to understand that overdoses from opioids are on the rise and are killing Americans of all ages and backgrounds. Families and communities across the country are coping with the health, emotional and economic effects of this epidemic.<sup>2</sup>

This educational fact sheet, created by the New Jersey Department of Education as required by state law (*N.J.S.A. 18A:40-41.10*), provides information concerning the use and misuse of opioid drugs in the event that a health care provider prescribes a student-athlete or cheerleader an opioid for a sports-related injury. Student-athletes and cheerleaders participating in an interscholastic sports program (and their parent or guardian, if the student is under age 18) must provide their school district written acknowledgment of their receipt of this fact sheet.

### How Do Athletes Obtain Opioids?

In some cases, student-athletes are prescribed these medications. According to research, about a third of young people studied obtained pills from their own previous prescriptions (i.e., an unfinished prescription used outside of a physician's supervision), and 83 percent of adolescents had unsupervised access to their prescription medications.<sup>3</sup> It is important for parents to understand the possible hazard of having unsecured prescription medications in their households. Parents should also understand the importance of proper storage and disposal of medications, even if they believe their child would not engage in non-medical use or diversion of prescription medications.

### What Are Signs of Opioid Use?

According to the National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence, 12 percent of male athletes and 8 percent of female athletes had used prescription opioids in the 12-month period studied.<sup>3</sup> In the early stages of abuse, the athlete may exhibit unprovoked nausea and/or vomiting. However, as he or she develops a tolerance to the drug, those signs will diminish. Constipation is not uncommon, but may not be reported. One of the most significant indications of a possible opioid addiction is an athlete's decrease in academic or athletic performance, or a lack of interest in his or her sport. If these warning signs are noticed, best practices call for the student to be referred to the appropriate professional for screening,<sup>4</sup> such as provided through an evidence-based practice to identify problematic use, abuse and dependence on illicit drugs (e.g., Screening, Brief Intervention, and Referral to Treatment (SBIRT)) offered through the New Jersey Department of Health.

## What Are Some Ways Opioid Use and Misuse Can Be Prevented?

According to the New Jersey State Interscholastic Athletic Association (NJSIAA) Sports Medical Advisory Committee chair, John P. Kripsak, D.O., "Studies indicate that about 80 percent of heroin users started out by abusing narcotic painkillers."

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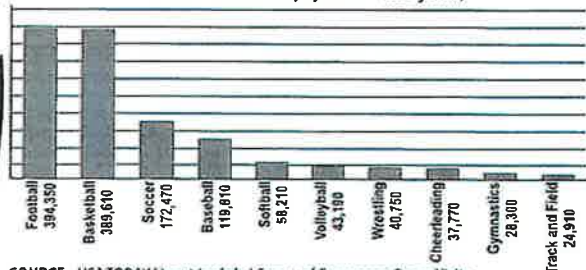
The Sports Medical Advisory Committee, which includes representatives of NJSIAA member schools as well as experts in the field of healthcare and medicine, recommends the following:

- The pain from most sports-related injuries can be managed with non-narcotic medications such as acetaminophen, non-steroidal anti-inflammatory medications like ibuprofen, naproxen or aspirin. Read the label carefully and always take the recommended dose, or follow your doctor's instructions. More is not necessarily better when taking an over-the-counter (OTC) pain medication, and it can lead to dangerous side effects.
- Ice therapy can be utilized appropriately as an anesthetic.
- Always discuss with your physician exactly what is being prescribed for pain and request to avoid narcotics.
- In extreme cases, such as severe trauma or post-surgical pain, opioid pain medication should not be prescribed for more than five days at a time;
- Parents or guardians should always control the dispensing of pain medications and keep them in a safe, non-accessible location; and
- Unused medications should be disposed of immediately upon cessation of use. Ask your pharmacist about drop-off locations or home disposal kits like Deterra or Medsaway.



### Number of Injuries Nationally in 2012 Among Athletes 19 and Under from 10 Popular Sports

(Based on data from U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission's National Electronic Injury Surveillance System)



SOURCE: USA TODAY (Janet Loehrke) Survey of Emergency Room Visits

## Even With Proper Training and Prevention, Sports Injuries May Occur

There are two kinds of sports injuries. Acute injuries happen suddenly, such as a sprained ankle or strained back. Chronic injuries may happen after someone plays a sport or exercises over a long period of time, even when applying overuse-preventative techniques.<sup>5</sup>

Athletes should be encouraged to speak up about injuries, coaches should be supported in injury-prevention decisions, and parents and young athletes are encouraged to become better educated about sports safety.<sup>6</sup>

## What Are Some Ways to Reduce the Risk of Injury?

Half of all sports medicine injuries in children and teens are from overuse. An overuse injury is damage to a bone, muscle, ligament, or tendon caused by repetitive stress without allowing time for the body to heal. Children and teens are at increased risk for overuse injuries because growing bones are less resilient to stress. Also, young athletes may not know that certain symptoms are signs of overuse.

The best way to deal with sports injuries is to keep them from happening in the first place. Here are some recommendations to consider:



**PREPARE** Obtain the preparticipation physical evaluation prior to participation on a school-sponsored interscholastic or intramural athletic team or squad.



**CONDITIONING** Maintain a good fitness level during the season and offseason. Also important are proper warm-up and cooldown exercises.



**PLAY SMART** Try a variety of sports and consider specializing in one sport before late adolescence to help avoid overuse injuries.



**ADEQUATE HYDRATION** Keep the body hydrated to help the heart more easily pump blood to muscles, which helps muscles work efficiently.



**TRAINING** Increase weekly training time, mileage or repetitions no more than 10 percent per week. For example, if running 10 miles one week, increase to 11 miles the following week. Athletes should also cross-train and perform sport-specific drills in different ways, such as running in a swimming pool instead of only running on the road.



**REST UP** Take at least one day off per week from organized activity to recover physically and mentally. Athletes should take a combined three months off per year from a specific sport (may be divided throughout the year in one-month increments). Athletes may remain physically active during rest periods through alternative low-stress activities such as stretching, yoga or walking.



**PROPER EQUIPMENT** Wear appropriate and properly fitted protective equipment such as pads (neck, shoulder, elbow, chest, knee, and shin), helmets, mouthpieces, face guards, protective cups, and eyewear. Do not assume that protective gear will prevent all injuries while performing more dangerous or risky activities.

## Resources for Parents and Students on Preventing Substance Misuse and Abuse

The following list provides some examples of resources:

**National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence** – NJ promotes addiction treatment and recovery.

**New Jersey Department of Health, Division of Mental Health and Addiction Services** is committed to providing consumers and families with a wellness and recovery-oriented model of care.

**New Jersey Prevention Network** includes a parent's quiz on the effects of opioids.

**Operation Prevention Parent Toolkit** is designed to help parents learn more about the opioid epidemic, recognize warning signs, and open lines of communication with their children and those in the community.

**Parent to Parent NJ** is a grassroots coalition for families and children struggling with alcohol and drug addiction.

**Partnership for a Drug Free New Jersey** is New Jersey's anti-drug alliance created to localize and strengthen drug-prevention media efforts to prevent unlawful drug use, especially among young people.

**The Science of Addiction: The Stories of Teens** shares common misconceptions about opioids through the voices of teens.

**Youth IMPACTing NJ** is made up of youth representatives from coalitions across the state of New Jersey who have been impacting their communities and peers by spreading the word about the dangers of underage drinking, marijuana use, and other substance misuse.

### References

<sup>1</sup> Massachusetts Technical Assistance Partnership for Prevention  
<sup>2</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention  
<sup>3</sup> New Jersey State Interscholastic Athletic

Association (NJSIAA) Sports Medical Advisory Committee (SMAC)  
<sup>4</sup> Athletic Management, David Csillan, athletic trainer, Ewing High School, NJSIAA SMAC

<sup>5</sup> National Institute of Arthritis and Musculoskeletal and Skin Diseases  
<sup>6</sup> USA TODAY  
<sup>7</sup> American Academy of Pediatrics

## Use and Misuse of Opioid Drugs Fact Sheet

### Student-Athlete and Parent/Guardian Sign-Off

In accordance with *N.J.S.A. 18A:40-41.10*, public school districts, approved private schools for students with disabilities, and nonpublic schools participating in an interscholastic sports program must distribute this *Opioid Use and Misuse Educational Fact Sheet* to all student-athletes. In addition, schools and districts must obtain a signed acknowledgement of receipt of the fact sheet from each student-athlete, and for students under age 18, the parent or guardian must also sign.

This sign-off sheet must be returned prior to the student-athlete or cheerleader's first official practice session of the fall 2024 athletic season and annually thereafter prior to the student-athlete first official practice of the school year.

School Name: **Windsor Bergen Academy**

I/We acknowledge that we received and reviewed the Educational Fact Sheet on the Use and Misuse of Opioid Drugs.

Student Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Signature : \_\_\_\_\_  
(also needed if student is under age 18):

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Website Resources

- Sudden Death in Athletes  
<http://tinyurl.com/m2gjmvq>
- Hypertrophic Cardiomyopathy Association  
[www.4hcm.org](http://www.4hcm.org)
- American Heart Association [www.heart.org](http://www.heart.org)

## Collaborating Agencies:

**American Academy of Pediatrics**  
**New Jersey Chapter**

3836 Quakerbridge Road, Suite 108  
Hamilton, NJ 08619  
(p) 609-842-0014  
(f) 609-842-0015  
[www.aapnj.org](http://www.aapnj.org)



**American Heart Association**

1 Union Street, Suite 301  
Robbinsville, NJ, 08691  
(p) 609-208-0020  
[www.heart.org](http://www.heart.org)



**New Jersey Department of Education**

PO Box 500  
Trenton, NJ 08625-0500  
(p) 609-292-5935  
[www.state.nj.us/education/](http://www.state.nj.us/education/)



**New Jersey Department of Health**

P. O. Box 360  
Trenton, NJ 08625-0360  
(p) 609-292-7837  
[www.state.nj.us/health](http://www.state.nj.us/health)



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# SUDDEN CARDIAC DEATH IN YOUNG ATHLETES

## The Basic Facts on Sudden Cardiac Death in Young Athletes



STATE OF NEW JERSEY  
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

American Academy of Pediatrics  
DEDICATED TO THE HEALTH OF ALL CHILDREN™



American Heart  
Association

Learn and Live



## SUDDEN CARDIAC DEATH IN YOUNG ATHLETES

**S**udden death in young athletes between the ages of 10 and 19 is very rare. What, if anything, can be done to prevent this kind of tragedy?



**What is sudden cardiac death in the young athlete?**

Sudden cardiac death is the result of an unexpected failure of proper heart function, usually (about 60% of the time) during or immediately after exercise without trauma. Since the heart stops pumping adequately, the athlete quickly collapses, loses consciousness, and ultimately dies unless normal heart rhythm is restored using an automated external defibrillator (AED).

**How common is sudden death in young athletes?**

Sudden cardiac death in young athletes is very rare. About 100 such deaths are reported in the United States per year. The chance of sudden death occurring to any individual high school athlete is about one in 200,000 per year.



Sudden cardiac death is more common: in males than in females; in football and basketball than in other sports; and in African-Americans than in other races and ethnic groups.

**What are the most common causes?**

Research suggests that the main cause is a loss of proper heart rhythm, causing the heart to quiver instead of pumping blood to the brain and body. This is called ventricular fibrillation (ven-TRICK-you-lar-fib-roo-LAY-shun). The problem is usually caused by one of several cardiovascular abnormalities and electrical diseases of the heart that go unnoticed in healthy-appearing athletes.

The most common cause of sudden death in an athlete is hypertrophic cardiomyopathy (hi-per-TRO-fic CAR-dee-oh-my-OP-a-thee) also called HCM. HCM is a disease of the heart, with abnormal thickening of the heart muscle, which can cause serious heart rhythm problems and blockages to blood flow. This genetic disease runs in families and usually develops gradually over many years.

The second most likely cause is congenital (con-JEN-it-ai) (i.e., present from birth) abnormalities of the coronary arteries. This means that these blood vessels are connected to the main blood vessel of the heart in an abnormal way. This differs from blockages that may occur when people get older (commonly called "coronary artery disease," which may lead to a heart attack).

## SUDDEN CARDIAC DEATH IN YOUNG ATHLETES

Other diseases of the heart that can lead to sudden death in young people include:

- Myocarditis (my-oh-car-DIE-tis), an acute inflammation of the heart muscle (usually due to a virus).
- Dilated cardiomyopathy, an enlargement of the heart for unknown reasons.
- Long QT syndrome and other electrical abnormalities of the heart which cause abnormal fast heart rhythms that can also run in families.
- Marfan syndrome, an inherited disorder that affects heart valves, walls of major arteries, eyes and the skeleton. It is generally seen in unusually tall athletes, especially if being tall is not common in other family members.

### Are there warning signs to watch for?

- In more than a third of these sudden cardiac deaths, there were warning signs that were not reported or taken seriously. Warning signs are:
- Fainting, a seizure or convulsions during physical activity;
  - Fainting or a seizure from emotional excitement, emotional distress or being startled;
  - Dizziness or lightheadedness, especially during exertion;
  - Chest pains, at rest or during exertion;
  - Palpitations - awareness of the heart beating unusually (skipping, irregular or extra beats) during athletics or during cool down periods after athletic participation;
  - Fatigue or tiring more quickly than peers; or
  - Being unable to keep up with friends due to shortness of breath (labored breathing).

### What are the current recommendations for screening young athletes?

New Jersey requires all school athletes to be examined by their primary care physician ("medical home") or school physician at least once per year. The New Jersey Department of Education requires use of the specific Preparticipation Physical Examination Form (PPE). This process begins with the parents and student-athletes answering questions about symptoms during exercise (such as chest pain, dizziness, fainting, palpitations or shortness of breath); and questions about family health history.

The primary healthcare provider needs to know if any family member died suddenly during physical activity or during a seizure. They also need to know if anyone in the family under the age of 50 had an unexplained sudden death such as drowning or car accidents. This information must be provided annually for each exam because it is so essential to identify those at risk for sudden cardiac death.

The required physical exam includes measurement of blood pressure and a careful listening examination of the heart, especially for murmurs and rhythm abnormalities. If there are no warning signs reported on the health history and no abnormalities discovered on exam, no further evaluation or testing is recommended.

### Are there options privately available to screen for cardiac conditions?

Technology-based screening programs including a 12-lead electrocardiogram (ECG) and echocardiogram (ECHO) are noninvasive and painless options parents may consider in addition to the required

PPE. However, these procedures may be expensive and are not currently advised by the American Academy of Pediatrics and the American College of Cardiology unless the PPE reveals an indication for these tests. In addition to the expense, other limitations of technology-based tests include the possibility of "false positives" which leads to unnecessary stress for the student and parent or guardian as well as unnecessary restriction from athletic participation.

The United States Department of Health and Human Services offers risk assessment options under the Surgeon General's Family History Initiative available at <http://www.hhs.gov/familyhistory/index.html>.

### When should a student athlete see a heart specialist?

If the primary healthcare provider or school physician has concerns, a referral to a child heart specialist, a pediatric cardiologist, is recommended. This specialist will perform a more thorough evaluation, including an electrocardiogram (ECG), which is a graph of the electrical activity of the heart. An echocardiogram, which is an ultrasound test to allow for direct visualization of the heart structure, will likely also be done. The specialist may also order a treadmill exercise test and a monitor to enable a longer recording of the heart rhythm. None of the testing is invasive or uncomfortable.

### Can sudden cardiac death be prevented just through proper screening?

A proper evaluation should find most, but not all, conditions that would cause sudden death in the athlete. This is because some diseases are difficult to uncover and may only develop later in life. Others can develop following a

normal screening evaluation, such as an infection of the heart muscle from a virus.

This is why screening evaluations and a review of the family health history need to be performed on a yearly basis by the athlete's primary healthcare provider. With proper screening and evaluation, most cases can be identified and prevented.

### Why have an AED on site during sporting events?

The only effective treatment for ventricular fibrillation is immediate use of an automated external defibrillator (AED). An AED can restore the heart back into a normal rhythm. An AED is also life-saving for ventricular fibrillation caused by a blow to the chest over the heart (commotio cordis).

N.J.S.A. 18A:40-41a through c, known as "Janet's Law," requires that at any school-sponsored athletic event or team practice in New Jersey public and nonpublic schools including any of grades K through 12, the following must be available:

- An AED in an unlocked location on school property within a reasonable proximity to the athletic field or gymnasium; and
  - A team coach, licensed athletic trainer, or other designated staff member if there is no coach or licensed athletic trainer present, certified in cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) and the use of the AED; or
  - A State-certified emergency services provider or other certified first responder.
- The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends the AED should be placed in no more than a 1 to 1 1/2 minute walk from any location and that a call is made to activate 911 emergency system while the AED is being retrieved.

State of New Jersey  
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

**Sudden Cardiac Death Pamphlet**  
**Sign-Off Sheet**

Name of School District: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Local School: \_\_\_\_\_

I/We acknowledge that we received and reviewed the Sudden Cardiac Death in Young Athletes pamphlet.

Student Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent or Guardian  
Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_