Sudden Cardiac Arrest and Lindsay's Law

Information for the Youth Athlete and Parent/Guardian

- Lindsay's Law is about Sudden Cardiac Arrest (SCA) in youth athletes. This law went into effect in 2017. SCA is the leading cause of death in student athletes 19 years of age or younger. SCA occurs when the heart suddenly and unexpectedly stops beating. This cuts off blood flow to the brain and other vital organs. SCA is fatal if not treated immediately.

- "Youth" covered under Lindsay's Law are all athletes 19 years of age or younger that wish to practice for or compete in athletic activities organized by a school or youth sports organization.

- Lindsay's Law applies to all public and private schools and all youth sports organizations for athletes aged 19 years or younger whether or not they pay a fee to participate or are sponsored by a business or nonprofit. This includes:
    1) All athletic activities including interscholastic athletics, any athletic contest or competition sponsored by or associated with a school
    2) All cheerleading, club sports and school affiliated organizations including noncompetitive cheerleading
    3) All practices, interschool practices and scrimmages

- Any of these things may cause SCA:
    1) Structural heart disease. This may or may not be present from birth
    2) Electrical heart disease. This is a problem with the heart's electrical system that controls the heartbeat
    3) Situational causes. These may be people with completely normal hearts who are either are hit in the chest or develop a heart infection

- Warning signs in your family that you or your youth athlete may be at high risk of SCA:
    - A blood relative who suddenly and unexpectedly dies before age 50
    - Any of the following conditions: cardiomyopathy, long QT syndrome, Marfan syndrome, or other rhythm problems of the heart

- Warning signs of SCA. If any of these things happen with exercise, see your health care professional:
    - Chest pain/discomfort
    - Unexplained fainting/near fainting or dizziness
    - Unexplained tiredness, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
    - Unusually fast or racing heart beats

- The youth athlete who faints or passes out before, during, or after an athletic activity MUST be removed from the activity. Before returning to the activity, the youth athlete must be seen by a health care professional and cleared in writing.

- If the youth athlete's biological parent, sibling or child has had a SCA, then the youth athlete must be removed from activity. Before returning to the activity, the youth athlete must be seen by a health care professional and cleared in writing.

- Any young athlete with any of these warning signs cannot participate in practices, interschool practices, scrimmages or competition until cleared by a health care professional.

- Other reasons to be seen by a healthcare professional would be a heart murmur, high blood pressure, or prior heart evaluation by a physician.

- Lindsay's Law lists the health care professionals who may evaluate and clear youth athletes. They are a physician (MD or DO), a certified nurse practitioner, a clinical nurse specialist or certified nurse midwife. For school athletes, a physician's assistant or licensed athletic trainer may also clear a student. That person may refer the youth and family to another health care provider for further evaluation. Clearance must be provided in writing to the school or sports official before the athlete can return to the activity.

- Despite everyone's best efforts, sometimes a young athlete will experience SCA. If you have had CPR training, you may know the term "Chain of Survival." The Chain of Survival helps anyone survive SCA.

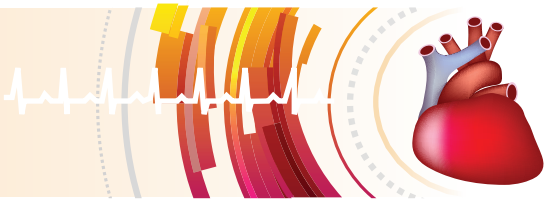
- Using an Automated External Defibrillator (AED) can save the life of a child with SCA. Depending on where a young athlete is during an activity, there may or may not be an AED close by. Many, but not all, schools have AEDs. The AEDs may be near the athletic facilities, or they may be close to the school office. Look around at a sporting event to see if you see one. If you are involved in community sports, look around to see if there is an AED nearby.

- If you witness a person experiencing a SCA: First, remain calm. Follow the links in the **Chain of Survival:**
  - ❖ Link 1: Early recognition
    - Assess child for responsiveness. Does the child answer if you call his/her name?
    - If no, then attempt to assess pulse. If no pulse is felt or if you are unsure, call for help "someone dial 911"
  - ❖ Link 2: Early CPR
    - Begin CPR immediately
  - ❖ Link 3: Early defibrillation (which is the use of an AED)
    - If an AED is available, send someone to get it immediately. Turn it on, attach it to the child and follow the instructions
    - If an AED is not available, continue CPR until EMS arrives
  - ❖ Link 4: Early advanced life support and cardiovascular care
    - Continue CPR until EMS arrives

- Lindsay's Law requires both the youth athlete and parent/guardian to acknowledge receipt of information about Sudden Cardiac Arrest by signing a form.

Sudden Cardiac Arrest and Lindsay's Law

Parent/Athlete Signature Form



What is Lindsay's Law? Lindsay's Law is about Sudden Cardiac Arrest (SCA) in youth athletes. It covers all athletes 19 years or younger who practice for or compete in athletic activities. Activities may be organized by a school or youth sports organization.

Which youth athletic activities are included in Lindsay's law?

- Athletics at all schools in Ohio (public and non-public)
- Any athletic contest or competition sponsored by or associated with a school
- All interscholastic athletics, including all practices, interschool practices and scrimmages
- All youth sports organizations
- All cheerleading and club sports, including noncompetitive cheerleading

What is SCA? SCA is when the heart stops beating suddenly and unexpectedly. This cuts off blood flow to the brain and other vital organs. People with SCA will die if not treated immediately. SCA can be caused by 1) a structural issue with the heart, OR 2) a heart electrical problem which controls the heartbeat, OR 3) a situation such as a person who is hit in the chest or a gets a heart infection.

What is a warning sign for SCA? If a family member died suddenly before age 50, or a family member has cardiomyopathy, long QT syndrome, Marfan syndrome or other rhythm problems of the heart.

What symptoms are a warning sign of SCA? A young athlete may have these things with exercise:

- Chest pain/discomfort
- Unexplained fainting/near fainting or dizziness
- Unexplained tiredness, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Unusually fast or racing heart beats

What happens if an athlete experiences syncope or fainting before, during or after a practice, scrimmage, or competitive play? The coach MUST remove the youth athlete from activity immediately. The youth athlete MUST be seen and cleared by a health care provider before returning to activity. This written clearance must be shared with a school or sports official.

What happens if an athlete experiences any other warning signs of SCA? The youth athlete should be seen by a health care professional.

Who can evaluate and clear youth athletes? A physician (MD or DO), a certified nurse practitioner, a clinical nurse specialist, certified nurse midwife. For school athletes, a physician's assistant or licensed athletic trainer may also clear a student. That person may refer the youth to another health care provider for further evaluation.

What is needed for the youth athlete to return to the activity? There must be clearance from the health care provider in writing. This must be given to the coach and school or sports official before return to activity.

All youth athletes and their parents/guardians must view the Ohio Department of Health (ODH) video about Sudden Cardiac Arrest, review the ODH SCA handout and then sign and return this form.

_____ Parent/Guardian Signature	_____ Student Signature
_____ Parent/Guardian Name (Print)	_____ Student Name (Print)
_____ Date	_____ Date

Ohio Department of Health Concussion Information Sheet

For Youth Sports Organizations

Dear Parent/Guardian and Athletes,

This information sheet is provided to assist you and your child in recognizing the signs and symptoms of a concussion. Every athlete is different and responds to a brain injury differently, so seek medical attention if you suspect your child has a concussion. Once a concussion occurs, it is very important your athlete return to normal activities slowly, so he/she does not do more damage to his/her brain.

What is a Concussion?

A concussion is an injury to the brain that may be caused by a blow, bump, or jolt to the head. Concussions may also happen after a fall or hit that jars the brain. A blow elsewhere on the body can cause a concussion even if an athlete does not hit his/her head directly. Concussions can range from mild to severe, and athletes can get a concussion even if they are wearing a helmet.

Signs and Symptoms of a Concussion

Athletes do not have to be "knocked out" to have a concussion. In fact, less than 1 out of 10 concussions result in loss of consciousness. Concussion symptoms can develop right away or up to 48 hours after the injury. Ignoring any signs or symptoms of a concussion puts your child's health at risk!

Signs Observed by Parents or Guardians

- *Appears dazed or stunned.*
- *Is confused about assignment or position.*
- *Forgets plays.*
- *Is unsure of game, score or opponent.*
- *Moves clumsily.*
- *Answers questions slowly.*
- *Loses consciousness (even briefly).*
- *Shows behavior or personality changes (irritability, sadness, nervousness, feeling more emotional).*
- *Can't recall events before or after hit or fall.*

Symptoms Reported by Athlete

- *Any headache or "pressure" in head. (How badly it hurts does not matter.)*
- *Nausea or vomiting.*
- *Balance problems or dizziness.*
- *Double or blurry vision.*
- *Sensitivity to light and/or noise*
- *Feeling sluggish, hazy, foggy or groggy.*
- *Concentration or memory problems.*
- *Confusion.*
- *Does not "feel right."*
- *Trouble falling asleep.*
- *Sleeping more or less than usual.*

Be Honest

Encourage your athlete to be honest with you, his/her coach and your health care provider about his/her symptoms. Many young athletes get caught up in the moment and/or feel pressured to return to sports before they are ready. It is better to miss one game than the entire season… or risk permanent damage!

Seek Medical Attention Right Away

Seeking medical attention is an important first step if you suspect or are told your child has a concussion. A qualified health care professional will be able to determine how serious the concussion is and when it is safe for your child to return to sports and other daily activities.

- *No athlete should return to activity on the same day he/she gets a concussion.*
- *Athletes should NEVER return to practices/games if they still have ANY symptoms.*
- *Parents and coaches should never pressure any athlete to return to play.*

The Dangers of Returning Too Soon

Returning to play too early may cause Second Impact Syndrome (SIS) or Post-Concussion Syndrome (PCS). SIS occurs when a second blow to the head happens before an athlete has completely recovered from a concussion. This second impact causes the brain to swell, possibly resulting in brain damage, paralysis, and even death. PCS can occur after a second impact. PCS can result in permanent, long-term concussion symptoms. The risk of SIS and PCS is the reason why no athlete should be allowed to participate in any physical activity before they are cleared by a qualified health care professional.

Recovery

A concussion can affect school, work, and sports. Along with coaches and teachers, the school nurse, athletic trainer, employer, and other school administrators should be aware of the athlete's injury and their roles in helping the child recover.

During the recovery time after a concussion, physical and mental rest are required. A concussion upsets the way the brain normally works and causes it to work longer and harder to complete even simple tasks. Activities that require concentration and focus may make symptoms worse and cause the brain to heal slower. Studies show that children's brains take several weeks to heal following a concussion.

Ohio Department of Health

OHIO INJURY PREVENTION PARTNERSHIP
Injury Prevention Policy and Advocacy Action Group

http://www.odh.ohio.gov/concussion

Returning to Daily Activities

1. Be sure your child gets plenty of rest and enough sleep at night – no late nights. Keep the same bedtime weekdays and weekends.
2. Encourage daytime naps or rest breaks when your child feels tired or worn-out.
3. Limit your child's activities that require a lot of thinking or concentration (including social activities, homework, video games, texting, computer, driving, job-related activities, movies, parties). These activities can slow the brain's recovery.
4. Limit your child's physical activity, especially those activities where another injury or blow to the head may occur.
5. Have your qualified health care professional check your child's symptoms at different times to help guide recovery.

Returning to Learn (School)

1. Your athlete may need to initially return to school on a limited basis, for example for only half-days, at first. This should be done under the supervision of a qualified health care professional.
2. Inform teacher(s), school counselor or administrator(s) about the injury and symptoms. School personnel should be instructed to watch for:

   a. Increased problems paying attention.

   b. Increased problems remembering or learning new information.

   c. Longer time needed to complete tasks or assignments.

   d. Greater irritability and decreased ability to cope with stress.

   e. Symptoms worsen (headache, tiredness) when doing schoolwork.
3. Be sure your child takes multiple breaks during study time and watch for worsening of symptoms.
4. If your child is still having concussion symptoms, he/she may need extra help with school-related activities. As the symptoms decrease during recovery, the extra help or supports can be removed gradually.5. For more information, please refer to Return to Learn on the ODH website.

Resources

ODH Violence and Injury Prevention Section
http://www.odh.ohio.gov/concussion

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
https://www.cdc.gov/headsup/youthsports/

National Federation of State High School Associations
www.nfhs.org

Brain Injury Association of America
www.biausa.org/

Returning to Play

1. Returning to play is specific for each person, depending on the sport. *Starting 4/26/13, Ohio law requires written permission from a health care provider before an athlete can return to play*. Follow instructions and guidance provided by a health care professional. It is important that you, your child and your child's coach follow these instructions carefully.
2. Your child should NEVER return to play if he/she still has ANY symptoms. (Be sure that your child does not have any symptoms at rest and while doing any physical activity and/or activities that require a lot of thinking or concentration).
3. Ohio law prohibits your child from returning to a game or practice on the same day he/she was removed.
4. Be sure that the athletic trainer, coach and physical education teacher are aware of your child's injury and symptoms.
5. Your athlete should complete a step-by-step exercise-based progression, under the direction of a qualified healthcare professional.
6. A sample activity progression is listed below. Generally, each step should take no less than 24 hours so that your child's full recovery would take about one week once they have no symptoms at rest and with moderate exercise.*

Sample Activity Progression*

***Step 1**: Low levels of non-contact physical activity, provided NO SYMPTOMS return during or after activity. (Examples: walking, light jogging, and easy stationary biking for 20-30 minutes).*

***Step 2**: Moderate, non-contact physical activity, provided NO SYMPTOMS return during or after activity. (Examples: moderate jogging, brief sprint running, moderate stationary biking, light calisthenics, and sport-specific drills without contact or collisions for 30-45 minutes).*

***Step 3**: Heavy, non-contact physical activity, provided NO SYMPTOMS return during or after activity. (Examples: extensive sprint running, high intensity stationary biking, resistance exercise with machines and free weights, more intense non-contact sports specific drills, agility training and jumping drills for 45-60 minutes).*

***Step 4**: Full contact in controlled practice or scrimmage.*

***Step 5**: Full contact in game play.*

***If any symptoms occur, the athlete should drop back to the previous step and try to progress again after a 24 hour rest period**.

Ohio Department of Health

Ohio Department of Health
Violence and Injury
Prevention Section
246 North High Street, 5th Floor
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(614) 466-2144

http://www.odh.ohio.gov/concussion

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Ohio Department of Health Concussion Information Sheet

For Youth Sports Organizations

I have read the Ohio Department of Health's Concussion Information Sheet and understand that I have a responsibility to report my/my child's symptoms to coaches, administrators and healthcare provider.

I also understand that I/my child must have no symptoms before return to play can occur.

_____ _____

Athlete Signature Date

_____

Athlete *Please Print Name*

_____ _____

Parent/Guardian Signature Date

_____

Parent/Guardian *Please Print Name*

Ohio Department of Health

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