



# SCA is the #1 Cause of Death Among Student Athletes

**T**housands of kids die annually from undetected heart conditions that can cause Sudden Cardiac Arrest (SCA). SCA is not a heart attack. It's an abnormality in the heart's electrical system or structure that abruptly stops the heartbeat. It's fatal in 92 percent of cases if not properly treated within minutes.

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The Eric Paredes Save A Life Foundation is partnering with CIF to develop policies on SCA prevention to help protect our student athletes. We're working hand-in-hand to educate parents, students and coaches about SCA warning signs and risk factors and to provide training to combat these dangers.

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Young people often don't tell adults if they experience symptoms in the hopes they will just go away. Sometimes they're embarrassed they are not keeping up and think the answer is to train harder. Athletes (and often their parents) don't want to jeopardize their playing time.

We need to let student athletes know that if they experience any of the symptoms listed here—especially fainting, as it's the #1 sign of a potential heart condition—they need to speak up.



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# Help Keep Her Heart in the Game

While SCA often has no warning signs, a study published by the Journal of the American Board of Family Medicine (2012) revealed that 72% of students who suffered from SCA were reported by their parents to have at least one cardiovascular symptom before SCA. They just didn't recognize it as life threatening. That's why it's important for everyone to understand potential warnings.

## **Possible indicators that SCA is about to happen**

- ▶ racing heart, palpitations or irregular heartbeat
- ▶ dizziness or lightheadedness
- ▶ fainting or seizure, especially during or right after exercise
- ▶ fainting repeatedly or with excitement or startle
- ▶ chest pain or discomfort with exercise
- ▶ excessive, unexpected fatigue during or after exercise
- ▶ excessive shortness of breath during exercise

## **Factors that increase risk of SCA**

- ▶ family history of known heart abnormalities or sudden death before age 50
- ▶ specific family history of Long QT Syndrome, Brugada Syndrome, Hypertrophic Cardiomyopathy, or Arrhythmogenic Right Ventricular Dysplasia (ARVD)
- ▶ family members with unexplained fainting, seizures, near/drowning or car accidents
- ▶ known structural heart abnormality, repaired or unrepaired
- ▶ use of drugs, such as cocaine, inhalants, recreational drugs or excessive energy drinks



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