



Book	Policy Manual
Section	5000 Students
Title	STUDENT ACCIDENTS/ILLNESS/CONCUSSION & SUDDEN CARDIAC ARREST
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5340 - **STUDENT ACCIDENTS/ILLNESS/CONCUSSION & SUDDEN CARDIAC ARREST**

The Board believes that school personnel have certain responsibilities in case of accidents, illness or concussions that occur in school. Said responsibilities extend to the administration of first aid by persons trained to do so, summoning of medical assistance, notification of administration personnel, notification of parents, and the filing of accident reports.

Accidents

Employees should administer first aid within the limits of their knowledge of recommended practices. All employees should make an effort to increase their understanding of the proper steps to be taken in the event of an accident. However, any staff member or volunteer who, in good faith, renders emergency care to a student is immune from civil liability for their acts or omissions in rendering such emergency care.

The District Administrator may provide for an in-service program on first aid and CPR procedures.

The administrator in charge must submit an accident report to the school office on all accidents.

Illness

School personnel shall not diagnose illness or administer medication of any kind except in accordance with Policy 5330.

Concussion

A concussion is a type of traumatic brain injury. Concussions occur when there is a forceful blow to the head or body that results in rapid movement of the head and causes any change in behavior, thinking, or physical functioning. Concussions are not limited to situations involving loss of consciousness. Some symptoms of a concussion include headache, nausea, confusion, memory difficulties, dizziness, blurred vision, anxiety, difficulty concentrating, and difficulty sleeping.

At the beginning of a season of any athletic sport, the Athletic Director shall distribute a concussion and head injury information sheet to each coach and to each student participant. No student will be permitted to participate in any athletic activity unless that student, or if the student is under age nineteen (19) his/her parent, has returned a signed concussion and head injury information sheet. A student is only required to return one (1) signed sheet per school year in order to participate in athletics.

A coach shall remove from competition or practice any student that the coach determines is exhibiting signs, symptoms, or behavior consistent with a concussion or head injury or who the coach suspects have sustained a concussion or head injury. Any student removed from participation under this section may not return to participation until a written release to participate from a healthcare professional is provided.

Parents who inform coaches or other school officials that their child is being treated by a healthcare professional for a concussion must provide written clearance from that healthcare professional for full or limited participation in class, practice, activity, or competition. Prior to receiving written clearance from a healthcare professional, students who have sustained a concussion may not participate in any school-related physical activities.

Sudden Cardiac Arrest

Sudden cardiac arrest is a medical event that involves a sudden increase in the heart's ventricular beat that prevents the heart from distributing blood to the brain, lungs, and other organs. It occurs without warning and in youth athletics participants who appear healthy and have passed pre-participation physical examinations. Severe damage and death can occur very quickly without immediate treatment.

In an effort to educate parents, students, and coaches regarding this condition, information regarding sudden cardiac arrest shall be included along with distribution of the required information concerning concussions and shall be distributed to all participants age 12 and older and to coaches prior to participation on youth athletic activity. The information shall contain the following information as provided by the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction:

- A. information about the risks associated continuing to participate in a youth activity after experiencing one (1) or more symptoms of sudden cardiac arrest, including fainting, difficulty breathing, chest pains, dizziness, and abnormal racing heart rate;
- B. information about electrocardiogram testing, including the potential risks, benefits, and evidentiary basis behind electrocardiogram testing; and
- C. information how to request, from a student's health care provider, the administration of an electrocardiogram in addition to a comprehensive physical examination.

The District shall provide the information regarding sudden cardiac arrest developed by the Department of Public Instruction and the Wisconsin Interscholastic Athletic Association.

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Sudden Cardiac Arrest Information

[Wis. Stat. § 118.2935 Sudden cardiac arrest; youth athletic activities](#)

Sudden cardiac arrest (SCA), while rare, is the leading cause of death in young athletes while training or participating in sport competition. Even athletes who appear healthy and have a normal preparticipation screening may have underlying heart abnormalities that can be life-threatening. A family history of SCA at younger than age 50 or cardiomyopathy (heart muscle problem) places an athlete at greater risk. **Athletes should inform the healthcare provider performing their physical examination about their family's heart history.**

What is Sudden Cardiac Arrest? Cardiac arrest is a condition in which the heart suddenly and unexpectedly stops beating. If this happens, blood stops flowing to the brain, lungs, and other vital organs.

Cardiac arrest usually causes death if it is not treated with cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) and an automated external defibrillator (AED) within minutes.

Cardiac arrest is not the same as a heart attack. A heart attack occurs if blood flow to part of the heart muscle is blocked. During a heart attack, the heart usually does not suddenly stop beating. In cardiac arrest the heart stops beating.

What warning signs during exercise should athletes/coaches/parents watch out for?

- Fainting/blackouts (especially during exercise)
- Dizziness
- Unusual fatigue/weakness
- Chest pain/tightness with exertion
- Shortness of breath
- Nausea/vomiting
- Palpitations (heart is beating unusually fast or skipping beats)

Stop activity/exercise immediately if you have any of the warning signs of Sudden Cardiac Arrest.

Speak up and tell a coach and parent/guardian if you notice problems when exercising.

If an athlete has any warning signs of SCA while exercising, they should **seek medical attention and evaluation from a healthcare provider before returning to a game or practice.**

The risk associated with continuing to participate in a youth activity after experiencing warning signs is that the athlete may experience SCA, which usually causes death if not treated with CPR and an AED within minutes.

What are ways to screen for Sudden Cardiac Arrest (SCA)?

[WIAA Pre-Participation Physical Evaluation](#) – the Medical History form includes important heart related questions and is required every other year. Additional screening using an electrocardiogram and/or an echocardiogram may be done if there are concerns in the history or physical examination but is not required (by WIAA). Parents/guardians/athletes should discuss the need for specific cardiac testing with the medical provider performing the review of family history and physical evaluation or after experiencing warning signs of sudden cardiac arrest while exercising. The cost of the pre-participation physical and any follow up examinations or recommended testing including an electrocardiogram is the responsibility of the athlete and their parents/guardians. **Not all cases or causes of SCA in young athletes are detected in the history, examination, or with testing.**

What is an electrocardiogram, its risks, and benefits? An electrocardiogram (ECG) is one of the simplest and fastest tests used to evaluate the heart. Electrodes (small, plastic patches that stick to the skin) are placed at specific spots on the chest, arms, and legs. The electrodes are connected to an ECG machine by wires. The electrical activity of the heart is then measured, interpreted, and printed out. No electricity is sent into the body. Risks associated with having an ECG are minimal and rare. The benefits include that it

is an easy procedure to do, can be performed in many health care offices and it may detect heart conditions in children with no symptoms. **ECGs are good at detecting certain heart conditions that may increase risk for SCA but may not detect all such conditions.** If not performed correctly the information is not valid and may lead to more (unnecessary) testing and further examinations. ECGs should be interpreted by experts in reading ECGs in children (i.e., pediatric cardiologists). For more information, [view the Johns Hopkins Medicine - Electrocardiogram website.](#)

How may a student athlete and parent/guardian request the administration of an electrocardiogram and a comprehensive physical examination? Athletes participating in WIAA sports are required to have a physical examination and review of family history every other year. Other youth sports have similar requirements. Although the cost of these medical examinations is the responsibility of the athlete's family many school districts can assist students to find low cost or no cost ways to obtain these examinations. Athletes should contact their school athletic director if they need assistance in getting an examination. If an athlete has risk factors, family history of heart disease, or has had warning signs associated with sudden cardiac arrest while exercising, they should tell the medical provider performing the history and physical examination and discuss the possible need for an electrocardiogram.