



COMMOTIO CORDIS

What is Commotio Cordis?

- Commotio cordis, Latin for “commotion or disturbance of the heart” is caused by a blunt trauma to the area of the chest directly over the heart during a precise moment of the heart’s cycle, leading to sudden cardiac arrest. Commotio cordis is usually caused by a baseball, lacrosse ball, hockey puck, fist, shoulder or knee.

Who is at risk?

- Commotio cordis can happen to anyone, but research has shown that young males 10-15 years old are most at risk.
- Commercially available chest protectors provide little or no protection, thus creating a false sense of security. Chest protectors are designed primarily to protect a child from soft tissue damage and bone injury on impact, not as protection from the potentially fatal heart rhythm that can also occur as a result.

What can you do to protect youth from Commotio Cordis?

- Have an Emergency Action Plan (EAP) in place that includes the cardiac chain of survival and is practiced at least annually.
- Recognize commotio cordis and initiate the cardiac chain of survival immediately.
- Have an accessible Automated External Defibrillator (AED) at all athletic events and practices. Defibrillation (use of AED) is the only effective treatment for commotio cordis.
- Ensure that coaches, umpires, trainers, and parents are trained in cardio-pulmonary resuscitation (CPR) and AED use.
- Coaches and parents should teach youth the proper playing and position techniques through controlled practice sessions to protect themselves against chest injuries.

For more information, visit www.parentheartwatch.org or call 1-800-717-5828

