

# AAP: All Children Should be Screened for Risk of Sudden Cardiac Arrest/Death



## You Are The Front Line of Prevention

New recommendations from the American Academy of Pediatrics calls for all youth to be regularly screened for heart conditions that put them at risk for sudden cardiac arrest (SCA). Youth should be screened during well-child check-ups and preparticipation physical evaluations (PPEs) or at least every three years, and especially upon entry to middle/junior and high school. Here's how to incorporate cardiac risk assessment into your practice:

- Proactively review cardiac questionnaire with both youth and parents/guardians
- Assess family history of heart disease or sudden death under age 50 and use genetic testing if risk factors are present
- Ask if youth has experienced symptoms including fainting, chest pain, shortness of breath, racing heart, dizziness or excessive fatigue
- Administer electrocardiogram (ECG) for the early detection of heart conditions that may lead to cardiac arrest
- Refer patient to a pediatric cardiologist for further evaluation of symptoms or diagnostic testing

*Find robust cardiac risk assessment tools at*

[www.ParentHeartWatch.org](http://www.ParentHeartWatch.org)

## SCA in Youth...Not so Rare

- 1 in 300 youth has an underlying heart condition that puts them at risk for SCA
- #1 killer of athletes during sports
- Leading cause of death on school campuses
- Up to 72% of youth stricken by SCA had unrecognized warning signs
- A cardiac diagnosis was not considered for 60% of SCA victims with preceding symptoms
- Up to 49% of SCA victims had a significant family heart history

## Don't Take a Chance With a Child's Heart

The standard approach to well-child checkups and PPEs misses about 90% of heart conditions that can put kids at risk for SCA. And most of these conditions are not detectable with a stethoscope. Research shows that ECGs are the most effective way to diagnose an undetected heart condition—especially since most youth do not report or recognize associated symptoms. That's why Parent Heart Watch supports ECG screenings as a best practice in youth health care.



**Parent Heart Watch.**  
THE NATIONAL VOICE  
PROTECTING YOUTH FROM SUDDEN CARDIAC ARREST