

Sports Medicine – Sickle Cell Trait

Summary

This policy has been developed to provide clear guidance on sickle cell trait and the standards for testing student athletes.

Purpose

To provide guidance on sickle cell trait and NCAA policy on sickle cell trait testing.

Policy

About Sickle Cell Trait-

- Sickle cell trait is an inherited condition of the oxygen-carrying protein, hemoglobin, in the red blood cells.
- Sickle cell trait is a common condition (> three million Americans)
- Although Sickle cell trait is most predominant in African-Americans and those of Mediterranean, Middle Eastern, Indian, Caribbean, and South and Central American ancestry, persons of all races and ancestry may test positive for sickle cell trait.
- Sickle cell trait is usually benign, but during intense, sustained exercise, hypoxia (lack of oxygen) in the muscles may cause sickling of red blood cells (red blood cells changing from a normal disc shape to crescent or “sickle” shape), which can accumulate in the bloodstream and “logjam” blood vessels, leading to collapse from the rapid breakdown of muscles starved of blood.

Sickle Cell Trait Testing-

- The *NCAA* recommends that all NCAA student-athletes have knowledge of their sickle cell trait status before the student-athlete participates in any intercollegiate athletics event, including strength and conditioning sessions, practices, competitions, etc.
- Columbus State University’s Department of Athletics offers sickle cell trait screening in the form of a blood test to all student-athletes as part of the pre-participation physical examination process.
- Testing will be conducted through Sickle Cell Foundation of Georgia. Results will be kept on file with the Columbus State University Athletic Training Staff.

BOR Policy

N/A

Last Update

6/2016

Responsible Authority

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