WHAT IS SICKLE CELL TRAIT?

Sickle cell trait is not a disease. Sickle cell trait is the inheritance of one gene for sickle hemoglobin and one for normal hemoglobin. Sickle cell trait will not turn into the disease. Sickle cell trait is a life-long condition that will not change over time.

DO YOU KNOW IF YOU HAVE SICKLE CELL TRAIT?

People at high risk for having sickle cell trait are those whose ancestors come from Africa, South or Central America, India, Saudi Arabia and Caribbean and Mediterranean countries.

Sickle cell trait occurs in about 8 percent of the U.S. African-American population, and between one in 2,000 to one in 10,000 in the Caucasian population.

Most U.S. states test at birth, but most athletes with sickle cell trait don’t know they have it.

The NCAA recommends that athletics departments confirm the sickle cell trait status in all student-athletes.

Knowledge of sickle cell trait status can be a gateway to education and simple precautions that may prevent collapse among athletes with sickle cell trait, allowing you to thrive in your sport.

HOW CAN I PREVENT A COLLAPSE?

- Know your sickle cell trait status.
- Engage in a slow and gradual preseason conditioning regimen.
- Build up your intensity slowly while training.
- Set your own pace. Use adequate rest and recovery between repetitions, especially during “gassers” and intense station or “mat” drills.
- Avoid pushing with all-out exertion longer than two to three minutes without a rest interval or a breather.
- If you experience symptoms such as muscle pain, abnormal weakness, undue fatigue or breathlessness, stop the activity immediately and notify your athletic trainer and/or coach.
- Stay well hydrated at all times, especially in hot and humid conditions.
- Avoid using high-caffeine energy drinks or supplements, or other stimulants, as they may contribute to dehydration.
- Maintain proper asthma management.
- Refrain from extreme exercise during acute illness, if feeling ill, or while experiencing a fever.
- Beware when adjusting to a change in altitude, e.g., a rise in altitude of as little as 2,000 feet. Modify your training and request that supplemental oxygen be available to you.
- Seek prompt medical care when experiencing unusual physical distress.

For more information and resources, visit www.NCAA.org/health-safety
HIRAM COLLEGE STUDENT-ATHLETE SICKLE CELL TRAIT STATEMENT
(Include this form with your physical exam. It must be on file prior to participation in any intercollegiate athletic activity)

NAME ___________________________ SPORT ___________________________
PERMANENT ADDRESS ______________________________________________

The NCAA requires all athletes to provide sickle cell trait test results or waive testing. Please read the NCAA Student Athlete Fact Sheet for additional information. (fs.ncaa.org/Docs/healthsafety/SickleCellTraitforSA.pdf)

About Sickle Cell Trait
- Sickle cell trait is an inherited condition and 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 a 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.
- Recent studies show that persons with sickle cell trait are at an increased risk of collapse and death with vigorous exercise.
- The risk of serious complications and death among athletes with sickle cell trait can be greatly reduced with simple training modifications.
- Sickle cell trait is more common among people of African, Hispanic, Indian, Mediterranean and South/Central American descent. Sick cell can also be present in Caucasians.

Sickle Cell Trait Testing
- In the United States, sickle cell trait screening is done at birth.
- It is strongly encouraged that all athletes undergo screening for sickle cell trait unless documentation of birth screening results can be obtained or you undergo testing from a physician/health care provider.
- You can obtain a blood test from your physician or the Hiram College Julia Church Health Center offers sickle cell trait screening in the form of a blood test for a modest fee.
- You can opt out of sickle cell trait screening and your participation will not be affected – you are acknowledging and accepting the risk of NOT knowing your sickle cell trait status.
- Students who are sickle cell trait positive will meet with the sports medicine staff and coaching staff to review appropriate procedures and/or any modifications necessary for participation

PLEASE CHOOSE ONE OF THE FOLLOWING OPTIONS: Attach documentation

1. I am providing a copy of my newborn sickle cell screening test - result attached. _______

   I am providing a copy of a recent sickle cell screening test - result attached _______

   My result is: Positive _______  Negative _______

2. I would like to be tested (at my cost) by the Hiram College Health Center once I arrive on campus _____

3. I DECLINE SICKLE CELL TESTING - WAIVER: _______

   By signing this waiver I understand and acknowledge that the NCAA recommends that all student-athletes have knowledge of their sickle cell trait status. Additionally, I certify that I have read and fully understand the aforementioned facts and I have had the opportunity to review the NCAA fact sheet for further information about sickle cell trait and sickle cell trait testing. I understand the risks of NOT knowing my sickle cell trait status.

   Recognizing that my true physical condition is dependent upon an accurate medical history and a full disclosure of any symptoms, complaints, prior injuries, ailments, and/or disabilities experienced, I hereby affirm that I have fully disclosed above any prior medical history and/or knowledge of sickle cell trait status to the Hiram College Athletic Department.

   I do not wish to undergo sickle cell trait testing and I voluntarily agree to release, discharge, indemnify and hold harmless Hiram College, its officers, employees, agents and their successors and assigns from any and all costs, claims, damages or expenses, including attorney’s fees, arising from any loss or personal injury that might result from my refusal to be tested.

   I have read and signed this document with full knowledge of its significance. I further state that I am at least 18 years of age and competent to sign this waiver.

Student-Athlete’s Signature ___________________________ Student-Athlete’s Printed Name ___________________________ Date ______

Parent/Guardian’s Signature (if under 18 years of age) ___________________________ Parent/Guardian’s Printed Name ___________________________ Date ______

For additional information contact Jim Johnston, Head Athletic Trainer, Hiram College
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