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# SADS Foundation Messages

## **Sudden Arrhythmia Death Syndrome affects thousands nationwide**

Each year in the United States, hundreds of young people die suddenly and unexpectedly due to heart rhythm abnormalities (cardiac arrhythmias).

Your child or a young person you know may be at risk for sudden cardiac death due to an inherited condition. He/she will appear healthy and, in most cases, you will have absolutely no idea that something might be wrong. People with these disorders often appear healthy and active. Fainting or sudden death are the first physical symptoms.

These conditions are often genetic and more than one family member will be at risk. It is extremely important that all family members be tested once one family member is diagnosed.

## **Education saves lives**

A child or young adult should see a doctor if she/he has:

- A family history of unexpected, unexplained sudden death in young persons
- Fainting or seizure during exercise, excitement or startle
- Consistent or unusual chest pain and/or shortness of breath during exercise

Most cardiac problems that may cause sudden death in the young can be diagnosed and treated. With treatment, people can expect to live normal, productive lives.

All children should have the Risk Assessment questionnaire completed—and be checked by a doctor if they answer “yes” to any question—at well-child checks and before they participate in organized sports.

## **There is an active support community for people with SADS in their families**

The Sudden Arrhythmia Death Syndromes Foundation (the SADS Foundation) provides information about physician referrals, support groups, children’s programs and other events taking place in the SADS community across the country.

## **Action plan**

By increasing awareness in the general population about sudden cardiac death and its symptoms, more children will be correctly screened, diagnosed and treated after a fainting incident. Physician and patient education improves the chances that relatives of patients will be screened and treated if necessary.

The mission of the SADS Foundation is to save the lives and support the families of children and young adults who are genetically predisposed to sudden death due to heart rhythm abnormalities.

To learn more about educational presentations, activities, events, and programs available in your area, or to receive materials that could potentially save the lives of young people you care about, contact the SADS Foundation at 1-800-STOP-SAD.