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Support Group for Families with Heart Arrhythmia's

The Sudden Arrhythmia Death Syndromes (SADS) along with the University of Nebraska Medical Center will be hosting a free support group seminar at the Medical Center's Eppley Science Hall Auditorium located at 42nd Emile Street in Omaha, Nebraska on Wednesday October 27, 2004 from 6:00 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.

The meeting will provide families impacted by heart rhythm disorders (LQTS, HCM, ARVD, etc.) the opportunity to gather and discuss symptoms, evaluation, diagnosis, challenges of diagnosis, genetic testing and treatment options of patients with inherited causes of sudden death with medical experts in Cardiology.

Sudden Arrhythmia Death Syndromes continue to claim the lives of thousands of young people every year. These sudden and unexpected deaths are due to detectable, but often overlooked, heart arrhythmias and heart muscle defects. Long QT Syndrome (LQTS), Hypertrophic Cardiomyopathy (HCM), Arrhythmogenic Right Ventricular Dysplasia (ARVD) and other heart rhythm disorders can turn fatal at any time. These treatable conditions are often genetic and more than one family member will be at risk. Each month between 250-600 young people die suddenly and unexpectedly in the U.S. due to cardiac arrhythmias. There may be as many as 12 in every 5,000 young people genetically predisposed to these conditions.

A doctor should be seen if a child has any of the following symptoms: Family history of unexpected, unexplained sudden death in a young person; Fainting (syncope) or seizure during exercise, excitement or startle; Consistent or unusual chest pain and/or shortness of breath during exercise.

"These disorders are very treatable, so early diagnosis and proper treatment are crucial for preventing the tragedies that can occur," said Dr. G. Michael Vincent, Founder and President of the SADS Foundation. "If a child, teenager or young adult suffers a blackout without an obvious cause, especially if it was precipitated by exercise, swimming or emotional distress, I recommend asking the doctor about cardiac arrhythmias."

The panel will consist of cardiology experts from Utah and Nebraska. *Dr. G. Michael Vincent* is the Founder and President of the SADS Foundation, Professor of Medicine at the University of Utah School of Medicine and Chairman of the Department of Internal Medicine at LDS Hospital. *Dr. Christopher C. Erickson* is an Associate Professor with the Department of Pediatrics, Joint Division of Pediatric Cardiology for UNMC/CUMC/Children's Hospital Department of Internal Medicine Section of Cardiology. *Dr. John D. Kugler* is the D.B. and Paula Varner Professor of Pediatrics Chief, Joint Division of Pediatric Cardiology with the University of Nebraska Medical Center/Creighton University Medical Center/Children's Hospital. *Dr. John R. Windle* is a professor at the University of Nebraska Medical Center Internal Medicine Section of Cardiology.

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 find out more about SADS, to volunteer, or to contribute, please contact the SADS Foundation at 1-800-STOP-SAD.

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