



## **SICKLE CELL POLICY FOR PROSPECTIVE STUDENT-ATHLETE TRYOUTS**

### **About Sickle Cell Trait**

Sickle cell trait (SCT) is a rare condition that affects the type of hemoglobin found within the red blood cell. Hemoglobin is responsible for carrying oxygen within the red blood cell. During normal daily activities, those affected by SCT generally show no symptoms and may have no adverse health issues related to the abnormal hemoglobin. However, during intense exercise, red blood cells containing the sickle hemoglobin can change shape from round to sickle shaped. Sickled red blood cells may accumulate in the bloodstream during intense exercise, blocking normal blood flow to the tissues and muscles. Some athletes with SCT have experienced significant physical distress, collapsed, and some have even died. Heat, dehydration, altitude, asthma, or acute illness can increase the risk for or worsen the obligations associated with SCT, even when exercise is not intense. Symptoms include severe muscle cramps, dizziness, nausea, and extreme shortness of breath. If not recognized and treated relatively early, it may progress to multi-organ damage and possibly sudden death. Although rare, sudden death among athletes has occurred and been linked to carrying the trait. For a variety of reasons, the condition seems to affect individuals aged 18-24 years old at greater degrees than younger individuals. Although SCT is most prominent in African-Americans, and those of Mediterranean, Middle Eastern, Indian, Caribbean, and South and Central American ancestry, a person of any race or ancestry may test positive for sickle cell trait.

### **Policy**

The NCAA recommends that all Division II student-athletes be tested for SCT, show proof and results from a prior test, or sign a waiver to opt out if they decline to be tested. In accordance with this recommendation, Concordia University has implemented the following policy for Prospective Student-Athletes who wish to try out for a Concordia University athletic team.

1. Concordia University Athletic Department requires that all PSA try outs provide proof of their SCT status or sign a waiver opting out of providing test results. Note: All infants born after 1984 were tested for SCT at birth. Official documentation of the prospective student-athlete's SCT status may be available from the individual's family pediatrician.
2. If the PSA wishes to opt out of SCT testing, they will need to sign the attached waiver stating that they assume the potential risk of participating without knowing their SCT status.

**CONCORDIA**  
CAVALIERS



## **SICKLE CELL WAIVER FORM**

I, \_\_\_\_\_, have read and understand Concordia University's policy on sickle cell testing for tryouts. Should I be tested and found to have the disease, I will adhere to the policy regarding participation. Furthermore, I understand that if I choose to be tested I will not be allowed to participate in the tryout until the results of the test are returned and reviewed by a member of the Athletic Training staff. If I decline the test, I understand that I will be participating at my own risk. At this time:

I WOULD like to be tested for sickle cell anemia

I DECLINE to be tested for sickle cell anemia

Student-Athlete Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

(if student-athlete is a minor)