

Wesleyan College Health Services

Sickle Cell Trait Screening

Revised 1/9/12

Sickle Cell Trait (SCT) is the inheritance of an abnormal gene which can cause deformation (“sickling”) of the red blood cell. Approximately one in every 12 African-Americans has sickle cell trait (compared to ~ one in 2,000 to 12,000 white Americans). The gene for sickle cell trait is also present in individuals of Mediterranean, Middle Eastern, Indian, Caribbean and South / Central American ancestry. All newborns in the US are required to be screened for sickle cell.

SCT has been associated with exertional rhabdomyolysis, renal failure, as well as death, and complicating factors including: extreme exertion, increased heat, altitude, and dehydration. Over a seven year span, nine athletes participating in NCAA sports, died as a complication of sickle cell trait. It is because of this that the NCAA now mandates testing or proof of prior testing before starting practice, competition, or conditioning.

Effective for the 2011-2012 academic year, all athletes participating in NCAA Div I sports must have sickle cell testing performed, show proof of prior sickle cell testing, or sign a waiver demonstrating that they understand the importance of testing for sickle cell, decline testing, and thereby release their institution from any liability related to declining the test.

Why get tested? This test (a blood test) is relatively easy to perform, and can provide educational information. It is helpful to know your sickle cell status and this information may allow health care professionals to take better care of you. If you were born in the U.S., your test results may be available in your medical record

What happens if I test positive? Athletes that are sickle cell trait positive are able to participate in sports, often with no modifications whatsoever. Individuals that test positive for sickle cell trait will have a confirmatory test performed, and if positive, will be counseled on what can be done to avoid complications.

Who will know that I test positive? Test results will be kept confidential in accordance with the law and college policy, although the Health Services staff needs to be aware of your sickle cell status in order to provide optimal care of you. Otherwise, your consent will be requested before information is released.

Is it mandatory that I have the sickle cell trait test? The recommendation of NCAA is that every student athlete be tested or show proof of prior testing for sickle cell trait. **This testing should be obtained prior to the start of the school year. Take a copy of your test results to your appointment for your sports physical.**

Testing is available off campus at the student athletes’ expense. **Testing is not mandatory.** Please sign below, and if choosing to waive testing, this confirms that you understand the importance of testing, decline testing, and release Wesleyan College from any liability related to declining the test. If you are under 18 yrs old, a parent or guardian must sign & write their name.

Name of Student: _____ Sport: _____ Class _____

I agree to sickle cell testing at my expense. I agree to release the test results to Health Services & Wesleyan Athletics.

Signature _____ Date _____

I do not wish to have sickle cell testing performed. I understand the information provided above as well as the recommendation that testing be performed.

Signature _____ Date _____

Signature of parent or guardian (if under age 18) _____ Date _____

Print Name _____