

New BOYS Sports Physical Policy

Due to the string of recent sudden cardiac deaths of athletes on high school teams, the physicians at South Trace Pediatrics are changing policy in March 2011, concerning cardiovascular screening for sport physicals of all types.

If parents desire us to sign off on their son's sport physical form, he will be required to have an EKG every 36 months. These can be conveniently arranged at Children's South as an outpatient and the pediatric cardiologists will send a reading usually within 5 days. At that point, we will complete the form. For in-between years, only an examination will be necessary.

Although it cannot detect all problems, an EKG is a reasonable screening tool for detecting underlying heart rhythm and muscular defects that most often are the cause of sudden cardiac death in athletes. Research indicates that girls have an exceedingly small risk compared to boys. Thus, we will only require this test for males. This is also in line with the standards for sport participation exams from the American Academy of Pediatrics.

We realize that this change will inconvenience some and add expense to the child's sports participation that may not be covered by insurance. However, we feel it is a very important protection to avoid unspeakable tragedy on the field or court.

** If your son has ever had any cardiac rhythm or murmur problem documented in his medical records, please remind us, as we may be able to code the testing for possible insurance coverage. However, we cannot make any guarantees of coverage. **

You, of course, have the option of getting a sport physical at a facility that does not require an EKG. However, if you desire our doctors to clear them for a sport, this test will be required for all sport physical forms for middle school and older.