What is sickle cell trait?

Sickle cell trait is not a disease. Sickle cell trait is the inheritance of one gene for sickle hemoglobin and one for normal hemoglobin. Sickle cell trait will not turn into the disease. Sickle cell trait is a life-long condition that will not change over time.

Do you know if you have sickle cell trait?

People at high risk for having sickle cell trait are those whose ancestors come from Africa, South or Central America, India, Saudi Arabia and Caribbean and Mediterranean countries.

How can I prevent a collapse?

- Know your sickle cell trait status.
- Engage in a slow and gradual preseason conditioning regimen.
- Build up your intensity slowly while training.
- Set your own pace. Use adequate rest and recovery between repetitions, especially during “gassers” and intense station or “mat” drills.
- Avoid pushing with all-out exertion longer than two to three minutes without a rest interval or a breather.
- If you experience symptoms such as muscle pain, abnormal weakness, undue fatigue or breathlessness, stop the activity immediately and notify your athletic trainer and/or coach.
- Stay well hydrated at all times, especially in hot and humid conditions.
- Avoid using high-caffeine energy drinks or supplements, or other stimulants, as they may contribute to dehydration.
- Maintain proper asthma management.
- Refrain from extreme exercise during acute illness, if feeling ill, or while experiencing a fever.
- Beware when adjusting to a change in altitude, e.g., a rise in altitude of as little as 2,000 feet. Modify your training and request that supplemental oxygen be available to you.
- Seek prompt medical care when experiencing unusual physical distress.

For more information and resources, visit www.NCAA.org/health-safety
All athletes at Division I and II schools are required to be tested for the trait or sign a written release declining the test before competing. This is to make coaches and athletic trainers aware that some athletes may need to take precautions.
WWU VIKING
SICKLE CELL TRAIT TESTING WAIVER FORM

I,______________________________________ verify that I have been informed of the NCAA testing requirement for sickle cell trait. I understand and accept the possibility that I may have the sickle cell trait, but DECLINE to be tested.

Therefore, to the fullest extent allowed by law, I hereby hold harmless Western Washington University, its trustees, officers, directors, employees, agents, volunteers and assigns from any and all liability resulting from any consequences of an undiagnosed sickle cell trait. This hold harmless applies to any and all claims made by me, my family, estate, heirs or assigns.

I have been informed of the following: Sickle cell trait is not a disease, but a life-long condition that will not change over time. During intense exercise, sickle cell trait can block the normal blood flow to muscles. This can cause very sudden dizziness, loss of consciousness, physical distress, and death.

I understand that knowledge about sickle cell trait enables a student-athlete and their coach to manage the implications of having it, which is why the NCAA requirement is for my benefit (www.ncaa.org).

I understand that were I to consent to be tested, the results would not affect my status as a student-athlete or position on the team.

I understand this hold harmless is effective for as long as I participate in WWU Viking Athletics.

I have read and understand this hold harmless form.

Student Name (Print)______________________________________________________________

Student Signature______________________________________________________________

Date________________________________________________

Sport(s)________________________________________

* (If Athlete is under the age of 18)

Parent Signature______________________________________________________________