

## **Mandatory Medical Examination Question and Answer Document**

(Revised March 19, 2007)

### **NCAA Bylaw 17.1.5 Mandatory Medical Examination**

**Effective Date: May 01, 2007 (Division I); August 01, 2007 (Division II, Division III)**

Prior to participation in any practice, competition or out-of-season conditioning activities (or, in Division I, permissible voluntary summer conditioning in basketball and football or voluntary individual workouts pursuant to the safety exception), student-athletes who are beginning their initial season of eligibility shall be required to undergo a medical examination or evaluation administered or supervised by a physician (e.g., family physician, team physician). The examination or evaluation must be administered within six months prior to participation in any practice, competition or out-of-season conditioning activities. In following years, an updated history of the student-athlete's medical condition shall be administered by an institutional medical staff member (e.g., sports medicine staff, team physician) to determine if additional examinations (e.g., physical, cardiovascular, neurological) are required. The updated history must be administered within six months prior to the student-athlete's participation in any practice, competition or out-of-season conditioning activities for the applicable academic year. (Adopted: 1/8/07 effective 8/1/07)

### **Question and Answer Sections**

#### **Division I**

#### **Division II**

#### **Division III**

### **Resources**

Pre-participation Physical Examination. (2005). Third Edition. Vendome Group, LLC. ISBN: 0-07-144636-2. References to vendors on [page 12](#):

*Guideline 1b: Medical Evaluations, Immunizations and Records*. NCAA Sports Medicine Handbook. Available at: [www.ncaa.org/health-safety](http://www.ncaa.org/health-safety)

*Guideline 2a: Medical Disqualification of the Student-Athlete*. NCAA Sports Medicine Handbook. Available at: [www.ncaa.org/health-safety](http://www.ncaa.org/health-safety)

*Guideline 3a. Participation by the Student-Athlete with Impairment*. NCAA Sports Medicine Handbook. Available at: [www.ncaa.org/health-safety](http://www.ncaa.org/health-safety)

*Guideline 3c. The Student-Athlete with Sick Cell Trait*. NCAA Sports Medicine Handbook. Available at: [www.ncaa.org/health-safety](http://www.ncaa.org/health-safety)

**Division I Questions and Answers Section** (Date Issued: January 06, 2007)

**Question:** Who may conduct the student-athlete's medical examination?

**Answer:** Any licensed medical physician (e.g., team physician, student-athlete's personal physician) may conduct the medical exam, provided the medical exam is conducted within six months of the student-athlete's initial participation in athletically related activities at the Division I institution. Further, the institution may accept a form from the screening physician or can provide the student-athlete a form which outlines the standards for review. The pre-participation medical examination policy should be approved by the institution's team physician. The NCAA Sports Medicine Handbook provides guidance and references useful in developing institutional medical examination policy.

**Question:** May a physician's assistant or nurse practitioner administer the medical exam?

**Answer:** Yes, provided the physician's assistant or nurse practitioner administers the medical exam under the supervision and approval of a licensed medical physician.

**Question:** What constitutes an updated medical history?

**Answer:** The purpose of the updated medical history is to assess problems that have occurred since the student-athlete's medical examination. An institution's sports medicine staff (e.g., team physician) should determine if additional physical, cardiovascular or neurological exams are necessary by soliciting an interim medical history from the student-athlete. The updated history should combine a comprehensive questionnaire with height, weight, and blood pressure recordings that could indicate additional focused examination. For more information on medical evaluations and updates, please reference the NCAA Sports Medicine Handbook at [www.ncaa.org/health-safety](http://www.ncaa.org/health-safety).

**Question:** May an institution pay for the costs of a student-athlete's medical examination or updated medical history, and any additional recommended tests?

**Answer:** Yes. Per Bylaw 16.4, an institution, at its discretion, may pay the expenses of a student-athlete's medical examination or updated medical history as these are medical expenses incidental to a student-athlete's participation in intercollegiate athletics.

**Question:** May a prospect or student-athlete participate in any physical activity (e.g., limited tryouts) prior to undergoing a medical examination or receiving an updated medical history?

**Answer:** No. This proposal requires all student-athletes and incoming prospective student-athletes to undergo an updated medical history or medical examination, respectively, before initiating participation in required athletics activities each academic year.

**Question:** Is an updated medical history required prior to a student-athlete's participation in nonmandatory weight training and conditioning activities conducted by the institution's strength coach?

**Answer:** No. The initial medical examination or updated medical history is valid for the academic year and summer conditioning period. The proposal requires returning student-athletes to undergo an updated medical history before participating in required athletics activities at the beginning of each academic year (e.g., preseason practice activities, out-of-season conditioning during the academic year).

**Question:** How long should institutions retain a student-athlete's medical documents?

**Answer:** The NCAA Sports Medicine Handbook suggests that institutions retain medical documentation of student-athletes during the student-athlete's collegiate career. Further, institutions should consider state statutes for medical-records retention, institutional policy and any professional liability statute of limitations.

**Question:** What standards should the treating physician consider when conducting the medical examination?

**Answer:** It is highly recommended that the treating physician refer to the "Pre-participation Physical Examination" monograph as the minimal standards for this medical examination since this publication has been endorsed by several medical associations including the American Academy of Family Physicians, American Academy of Pediatrics and American College of Sports Medicine, amongst others. For a copy of the pre-participation form, please contact your institution's team physician or certified athletic trainer.

**Question:** Why do medical exams and medical history updates need to have been conducted within six months of the student-athlete's initial participation in athletics activities each academic year?

**Answer:** Since college students typically attend school away from their parents/legal guardians and their personal physicians, a medical

examination prior to initial intercollegiate athletics participation is warranted. A student-athlete's medical history changes over time and the closer the exam is to the start of his or her initial intercollegiate athletics participation, the more accurate the information. The medical examination should ideally be performed at least six weeks prior to the start of the activity to allow time for treatment and rehabilitation of identified ailments. Six months has been identified as the limit to allow institutions the flexibility to accommodate larger numbers of student-athletes arriving for fall semester. Although not required per this proposal, institutions may still want to inquire about a student-athlete's health status between the medical examination and start of athletics participation.

**Question:** How does this proposal apply to transfer student-athletes?

**Answer:** Because transfer student-athletes are considered prospective student-athletes, the proposal applies to a transfer student-athlete in the same way that it applies to any other prospective student-athlete (e.g., high school prospect).

**Division II Questions and Answers Section** (Date Issued: January 06, 2007)

**Question:** Who may conduct the prospective student-athlete or student-athlete's medical examination?

**Answer:** Any licensed medical physician (e.g., team physician, student-athlete's personal physician) may conduct the medical exam as long as the medical exam is conducted within six months of the student-athlete's initial participation in athletically related activities at the Division II institution. Further, the institution should provide the student-athlete a pre-participation exam form which outlines the standards for review including a thorough medical history, a physical exam and a screening for cardiovascular activity. The pre-participation form may be requested from your institution's team physician.

**Question:** May a physician's assistant or nurse practitioner administer the medical exam?

**Answer:** Yes, provided the physician's assistant or nurse practitioner administers the medical exam under the supervision and approval of a licensed medical physician.

**Question:** What constitutes an updated medical history?

**Answer:** The purpose of the updated medical history is to assess problems that have occurred since the student-athlete's medical examination. An institution's sports medicine staff (e.g., team physician) should determine if additional physical, cardiovascular or neurological exams are necessary by soliciting an interim medical history from the student-athlete. The updated history should combine a comprehensive questionnaire with height, weight, and blood pressure recordings that could indicate additional focused examination. For more information on medical evaluations and updates, reference the NCAA Sports Medicine Handbook at [www.ncaa.org/health-safety](http://www.ncaa.org/health-safety).

**Question:** May an institution pay for the costs of a student-athlete's medical examination or updated medical history?

**Answer:** Yes. Per Bylaw 16.4 (medical expenses), an institution, at its discretion, may pay the expenses of a student-athlete's medical examination or updated medical history as these are medical expenses incidental to a student-athlete's participation in intercollegiate athletics.

**Question:** May an institution provide medical expenses for a student-athlete to undergo additional medical tests if recommended by the student-athlete's treating physician?

**Answer:** Yes. Division II institutions have the discretion to provide any medical expense incidentals to a student-athlete's participation in intercollegiate athletics, including additional medical tests recommended by a treating physician per Bylaw 16.4 (medical expenses).

**Question:** May a student-athlete participate in any physical activity prior to undergoing a medical examination or receiving an updated medical history?

**Answer:** No. The proposal will require all student-athletes and incoming prospective student-athletes to undergo a medical examination or updated medical history respectively before initiating participation in required athletics activities each academic year.

Note 1: Athletically related activities conducted as a part of a tryout, per NCAA Bylaw 13.11.2.1 (tryouts) and Bylaw 17.02.12 (tryouts -- enrolled student), constitutes practice. Therefore, prospective student-athletes and enrolled student are required to undergo a medical examination or evaluation administered or supervised by a physician prior to participating in a tryout. [References: Bylaws 13.11.2.1 (tryouts) and 17.02.12 (tryouts -- enrolled student) and 2007 NCAA Convention Division II Proposal No. 23]

Note 2: Student-athlete's who are beginning their initial season of eligibility must undergo a medical examination or evaluation administered or supervised by a physician within six months prior to participation in individual skill instruction and, in following years, must have an updated medical history administered within six months prior to participation in individual skill instruction for the applicable academic year. [References: Bylaw 17.1.5.2.1 (skill instruction) and 2007 NCAA Division II Convention Proposal No. 23]

**Question:** Do spring sport student-athletes need physicals during the fall?

**Answer:** Possibly, the proposal calls for a physical examination to take place within six months prior to participation in any practice activities.

**Question:** Does the term "any practice activities" refer to activities taking place in the championship or nonchampionship segment?

**Answer:** Both the championship and nonchampionship segments.

**Question:** If the institution performs an updated medical history and determines that a student-athlete needs to undergo additional exams, is the student-athlete required to get the medical exam before initiating athletics activities?

**Answer:** Yes. If a physician determines that a student-athlete needs additional medical examinations before initiating participation in athletics activities based on an updated medical history, the student-athlete must undergo the additional medical exams and be cleared by the treating medical physician to participate in required athletics activities.

**Question:** What standards should the treating physician consider when conducting the medical examination?

**Answer:** It is highly recommended that the treating physician use the forms within the "pre-participation physical examination" monograph as the minimal standards for the medical examination since this publication has been endorsed by several medical associations including the American Academy of Family Physicians, American Academy of Pediatrics and American College of Sports Medicine, amongst others. For a copy of the pre-participation form, please contact your institution's team physician or certified athletic trainer.

**Question:** Why do medical exams and medical history updates need to have been conducted within six months of the student-athlete's initial participation in athletics activities each academic year?

**Answer:** Since college students typically attend school away from their parents and their personal physicians, a medical examination at entry into the intercollegiate athletics programs is warranted. A student-athlete's medical history changes over time and the closer the exam is to the start of participation, the more accurate the information. The medical examination should ideally be performed at least six weeks prior to the start of activity to allow time for treatment and rehabilitation of identified problems. Six months has been identified as the limit. This allows institutions the flexibility to accommodate the large number of student-athletes arriving for the fall semester. Institutions may still want to inquire about health status between the examination and the start of play.

**Question:** Do different sports require different types of medical exams?

**Answer:** No, the use of the history and screening physical exams should direct the physician to more specific, detailed exams as warranted.

**Question:** How are transfer student-athletes effected by 2007 NCAA Convention Division II Proposal No. 23?

**Answer:** If transfer students are participating in their initial season of competition they must undergo a physical. If they have already participated, the

student-athlete's former institution should supply that documentation to the new institution.

**Question:** Why is there a Division I reference in the proposal?

**Answer:** The proposal is common for all three divisions. Therefore, the legislation will appear the same in all three divisional NCAA Manuals.

**Question:** How long should institutions retain a student-athlete's medical documents?

**Answer:** The NCAA Sports Medicine Handbook suggests that institutions should retain medical documentation of student-athletes during the student-athletes' collegiate career. Further, institutions should consider state statutes for medical-records retention (e.g., seven years, 10 years); institutional policy (e.g., insurance long term retention policy); and professional liability statute of limitations.

**Division III Questions and Answers Section** (Date Issued: January 06, 2007)

**Question:** Who may conduct the student-athlete's medical examination?

**Answer:** Any licensed medical physician (e.g., team physician, student-athlete's personal physician) may conduct the medical exam so long as the medical exam is conducted within six months of the student-athlete's initial participation in athletically related activities at the Division III institution. Further, the institution may except a form from the screening physician or can provide the student-athlete a form which outlines the standards for review. The pre-participation medical examination policy should be approved by your institution's team physician. The NCAA Sports Medicine Handbook provides guidance and references useful in developing institutional policy.

**Question:** May a physician's assistant or nurse practitioner administer the medical exam?

**Answer:** Yes, provided the physician's assistant or nurse practitioner administers the medical exam under the supervision and approval of a licensed medical physician.

**Question:** What constitutes an updated medical history?

**Answer:** The purpose of the updated medical history is to assess problems that have occurred since the student-athlete's medical examination. An institution's sports medicine staff (e.g., team physician) should determine if additional physical, cardiovascular or neurological exams are necessary by soliciting an interim medical history from the student-athlete. The updated history should combine a comprehensive questionnaire with height, weight, and blood pressure recordings that could indicate additional focused examination. For more information on medical evaluations and updates, please access the NCAA Sports Medicine Handbook at [www.ncaa.org/health-safety](http://www.ncaa.org/health-safety).

**Question:** May an institution pay for the costs of a student-athlete's medical examination or updated medical history?

**Answer:** Yes. Per Division III Bylaw 16.4, an institution, at its discretion, may pay the expenses of a student-athlete's medical examination or updated medical history as these are medical expenses incidental to a student-athlete's participation in intercollegiate athletics.

**Question:** May an institution provide medical expenses for a student-athlete to undergo additional medical tests if recommended by the student-athlete's treating physician?

**Answer:** Yes. Division III institutions have the discretion to provide any medical expense incidental to a student-athlete's participation in intercollegiate athletics, including additional medical tests recommended by a treating physician, per Division III Bylaw 16.4 (medical expenses).

**Question:** May a student-athlete participate in any physical activity prior to undergoing a medical examination or receiving an updated medical history?

**Answer:** No. This proposal requires all student-athletes and incoming prospective student-athletes to undergo a medical examination or updated medical history respectively before initiating participation in athletics activities each academic year.

**Question:** If the institution performs an updated medical history and determines that a student-athlete needs to undergo additional exams is the student-athlete required to get the medical exam before initiating athletics activities?

**Answer:** Yes. If a medical physician determines that a student-athlete needs additional medical examinations before initiating participation in athletics activities, the student-athlete must undergo the additional medical exams and be cleared by the treating medical physician to participate in athletic activities.

**Question:** How long should institutions retain a student-athlete's medical documents?

**Answer:** The sports medicine handbook suggests that institutions should retain medical documentation of student-athletes during the student-athletes' collegiate career. Further, institutions should consider state statutes for medical records retention (e.g. 7 to 10 years); institutional policy (e.g. insurance); and professional liability statute of limitations.

**Question:** What standards should the treating physician consider when conducting the medical examination?

**Answer:** It's highly recommended that the treating physician refer to the "Pre-participation Physical Examination" monograph as the minimal standards for this medical examination since this publication has been endorsed by several medical associations including the American Academy of Family Physicians, American Academy of Pediatrics and American College of Sports Medicine, amongst others. For a copy of the pre-participation

form, please contact your institution's team physician or certified athletic trainer.

**Question:** Why do medical exams and medical history updates need to have been conducted within six months of the student-athlete's initial participation in athletics activities each academic year?

**Answer:** Since college students typically attend school away from their parents and their personal physicians, a medical examination at entry into the intercollegiate athletics programs is warranted. A student-athlete's medical history changes over time and the closer the exam is to the start of participation, the more accurate the information. The medical examination should ideally be performed at least 6 weeks prior to the start of activity to allow time for treatment and rehabilitation of identified problems. Six months has been identified as the limit. This allows institutions the flexibility to accommodate large number of student-athletes arriving for the fall semester. Institutions may still want to inquire about health status between the examination and the start of play.

**Question:** Do different sports require different types of medical exams?

**Answer:** No, the use of the history and screening physical exams should direct the physician to more specific, detailed exams as warranted.

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Endorsed by the following medical societies:

American Academy of Family Physicians (AAFP) Available at:  
<https://secure.aafp.org/catalog/viewProduct.do?productId=587&categoryId=9>  
Cost to general public: \$39.95 Members: \$29.95

American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP)  
Available at:  
[http://www.aap.org/bst/showdetl.cfm?&DID=15&Product\\_ID=3935&CatID=132](http://www.aap.org/bst/showdetl.cfm?&DID=15&Product_ID=3935&CatID=132)  
Cost to general public: \$39.95 Members: \$34.95

American College of Sports Medicine  
Available at: [http://www.acsm.org/AM/Template.cfm?Section=Books\\_and\\_Other\\_Media](http://www.acsm.org/AM/Template.cfm?Section=Books_and_Other_Media)

American Medical Society for Sports Medicine (AMSSM) Available at:  
<http://www.newamssm.org/Public.html>  
Cost to Members: \$29.95

American Orthopaedic Society for Sports Medicine (AOSSM) Available at:  
<http://www.sportsmed.org/store1/category.asp?categoryid=8>  
Cost to general public: \$39.95 Members: \$29.95

American Osteopathic Academy of Sports Medicine (AOASM) Available at:  
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