

Guarding against deadly blows to the chest in kids' sports

May 30 2016, by Lauran Neergaard

A blow to the chest sometimes knocks the heart out of rhythm, and can kill. Fortunately it's rare. But most victims are otherwise healthy kid athletes. And survival hinges on fast use of heart-zapping defibrillators that not every athletic league or school keeps near the playing fields.

Now a U.S. organization that oversees athletic equipment has proposed the first performance standard for chest protectors to reduce the risk.

There are lots of causes of [cardiac arrest](#) but so-called commotio cordis occurs when a blow hits directly over the heart at just the wrong time in the heartbeat. That may require a different design than to prevent, say, a broken rib.

Some parents say they hope the proposed standard will lead to better protection for young players.

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