Athlete awareness of sudden cardiac arrest low

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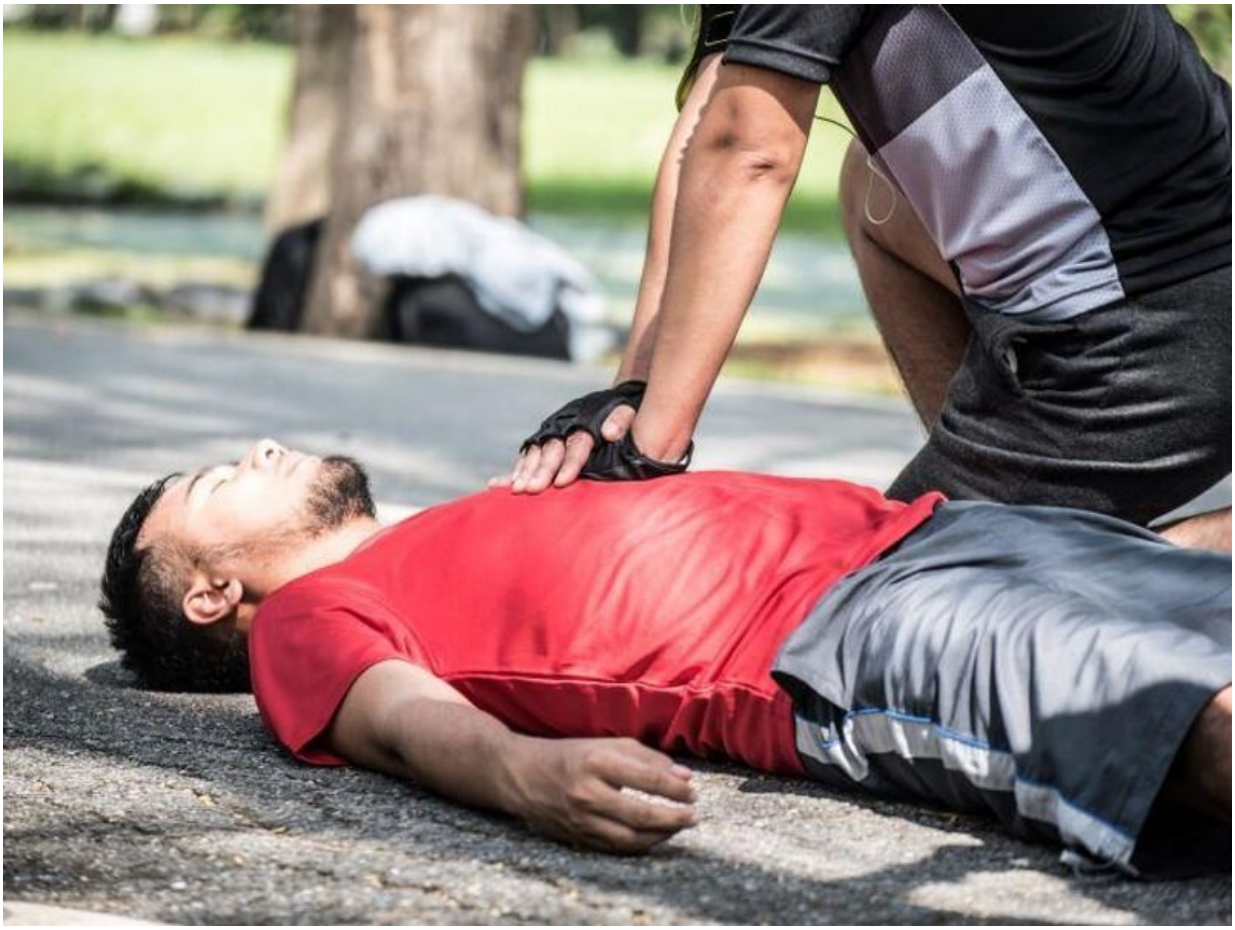

Few athletes can identify sudden cardiac arrest (SCA) or provide

cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) to a fallen athlete, according to research presented at the American College of Cardiology annual Care of the Athletic Heart conference, held from June 8 to 10 in Washington, D.C.

Merije T. Chukumerije, M.D., from the Cedars-Sinai Medical Group at the Smidt Heart Institute in Los Angeles, and colleagues conducted a literature review to evaluate the frequency of athletes providing CPR during sports-related SCA (SR-SCA).

The researchers identified 46 cases of SR-SCA involving CPR from 1984 to 2022. In most cases (89 percent), trained personnel provided CPR, but in five cases (11 percent), fellow athletes performed CPR, two of whom were trained first responders. In a survey to assess competitive athlete awareness of SR-SCA and CPR before the televised 2023 collapse of Damar Hamlin (104 collegiate athletes), only 50 percent reported knowing what SCA is, with no significant differences seen across sport, gender, or years of experience, and 51 percent reported receiving CPR training. Few athletes (7.7 percent) were concerned about SCA during play, with no significant differences seen across any group.

"Typically, the first and closest witnesses to a fallen player are their fellow athletes, so they should become part of the first response team," Chukumerije said in a statement. "In addition, athletes are ubiquitous in sports environments—the game, gym, practice facility, player-only training sessions—whereas trainers, coaches, etc. are not."

More information: Press Release
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