

Leading Cardiac Researcher Praises US Lacrosse Efforts to Keep the Sport Safe

BALTIMORE (8/12/09) - On Monday, August 10, the medical journal *Pediatrics* released Dr. Barry J. Maron's research, "Commotio Cordis and the Epidemiology of Sudden Death in Competitive Lacrosse." Dr. Maron is the Director of the Hypertrophic Cardiomyopathy Center at the Minneapolis Heart Institute Foundation and one of the world's leading experts on sudden cardiac death in sports. His study tracks every confirmed incidence of sudden heart stoppage in lacrosse over the last 28 years.

Unfortunately, several news headlines sensationalized Dr. Maron's work and misled readers. Quoted after his latest research was released, Dr. Maron explained, "The message is that there are risks associated with sports in young people, but it does not appear that lacrosse, which is the fastest growing youth sport in America, is associated with excessive risk compared to other sports."

Dr. Maron's research provides an invaluable perspective on Commotio Cordis in lacrosse, as well as ongoing US Lacrosse efforts to better understand and prevent this rare tragedy. In a recent interview with ABC News, Dr. Maron said, "US Lacrosse has made a large effort to support the design of an effective chest protector. Lacrosse, in that respect, is unique among national sports organizations. They've promoted this idea and supported ongoing research to create such a chest protector. They've done that on their own volition. They should be congratulated on their efforts to make their sport even safer than it is."

US Lacrosse has been a leader of Commotio Cordis education among national sports organizations and has significantly increased awareness and knowledge of Commotio Cordis throughout the national lacrosse community and, specifically, within the organization's network of 300,000 members in 62 regional chapters across the country. The US Lacrosse Sports Science & Safety Committee has made this issue a priority for a number of years, and has coordinated, funded and supported a number of educational and research initiatives focused on Commotio Cordis.

A sampling of the initiatives US Lacrosse has undertaken include:

- US Lacrosse online and print publications serve as national resources for Commotio Cordis information and education.
- The US Lacrosse Sports Science & Safety Committee hosted the first sport-specific symposium on Commotio Cordis in 2007. Dr. Maron was one of many distinguished participants at this inclusive gathering of doctors, researchers, equipment industry representatives, multi-sport organizations and family members of those who experienced Commotio Cordis events. Among the results of the symposium was the development of recommendations and an organizational position statement that have been widely distributed.
- US Lacrosse has supported ground-breaking swine research conducted by Dr. Mark Link of Tufts University, which has resulted in a NOCSAE grant to create a mechanical model that we believe will lead to the establishment of manufacturing standards for chest protectors. These manufacturing standards are expected to produce the first chest protector in any sport that actually reduces the risk of Commotio Cordis.
- US Lacrosse launched a national public relations campaign about the value of AEDs, conducted seminars on Commotio Cordis recognition and response at the US Lacrosse National Convention, and established a strategic alliance with AED manufacturer Cardiac Science to provide AED education and reduced pricing to the national lacrosse community, as well as an AED Grant Program.
- US Lacrosse produced a public service announcement on the value of AEDs featuring a lacrosse goalie who survived a Commotio Cordis episode thanks to prompt recognition by his coach and an available AED.
- US Lacrosse has established an ongoing partnership with the Louis J. Acompora Foundation to continue to raise awareness of Commotio Cordis, as well as the value of AEDs in reacting to a Commotio Cordis episode.

RESOURCES:

- [Marion, et al. "Commotio Cordis and the Epidemiology of Sudden Death in Competitive Lacrosse." *Pediatrics*. 10 Aug. 2009.](#)
- [US Lacrosse's Position Statement on Commotio Cordis](#)
- [Sudden Cardiac Death In Athletes](#) (by: Jeffrey S. Mandak, M.D., F.A.C.C., F.A.C.P.)
- [Commotio Cordis](#) (by: Dr. Vito A. Periello)
- [Ohanian, Paul. "Matters of the Heart." *Lacrosse Magazine*. Oct. 2007. \(PDF\)](#)
- [US Lacrosse's AED Program](#)
- [US Lacrosse Public Service Announcement](#)