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National Athletic Trainers' Association Hosts Third Annual Youth Sports Safety Summit and Media Briefing

*New insights, case histories and a call to action to
improve the safety and care of youth sports athletes are provided*

65 Sports, health and parent organizations supported the program as part of the Youth Sports Safety Alliance, with the collective effort of promoting increased education, research and legislation

WASHINGTON, D.C., December 6, 2011 – The ongoing incidence of youth sports injuries and the risk of chronic or catastrophic injury has highlighted an urgent need for immediate and improved health care on the playing field. Supported by 65 sports and health organizations, the National Athletic Trainers' Association (NATA) today hosted the third annual Youth Sports Safety Summit at the Cannon House Office Building in Washington, D.C. The event provided comprehensive recommendations to improve on-field safety and off-the-field care for young athletes.

“Young athletes are suffering chronic and sometimes catastrophic injury from sports that are otherwise designed to increase the spirit of competition, improve individual sports performance, instill a love of the game and provide potential careers for an elite few,” said the Summit’s moderator Marjorie J. Albohm, MS, ATC, president, National Athletic Trainers’ Association. “Only 42 percent of high schools have access to an athletic trainer, often the primary health care provider when a young athlete goes down on the playing field.”

Leading Causes of Death in Youth Sports

While concussion legislation has passed in 36 states, concussion is not the only problem in youth sports. In fact, the leading cause of death from youth sports is sudden cardiac arrest. The other conditions discussed at the Summit included asthma, catastrophic brain injuries, exertional heat stroke, and exertional sickling.

Even with greater vigilance and better care, young athletes continue to lose their lives on the playing field. High school athletes suffer 2 million injuries, have 500,000 doctor visits and 30,000 hospitalizations every year – and 40 young athletes have died from sports injuries so far this year according to NATA.

“Preventing Sudden Death in Sports” Position Statement

Summit attendees received an early look at a new position statement from NATA titled “Preventing Sudden Death in Sports,” which will be published in the February 2012 issue of the *Journal of Athletic Training*. To view an advance copy of the statement, please contact robin@robwax.com.

The statement outlines the top 10 major health conditions and causes of sudden death among young athletes – along with updated recommendations to ensure better prevention and treatment of youth sport injuries. “This is the first time NATA has provided this condensed information in one document to help medical professionals, coaches, parents and others make more effective and efficient return to play and care decisions,” Albohm said.

For information about the Youth Sports Safety Summit and the Youth Sports Safety Alliance, please visit www.youthsportssafetyalliance.org.

National Athletic Trainers’ Association (NATA) – Health Care for Life & Sport

Athletic trainers are health care professionals who specialize in the prevention, diagnosis, treatment and rehabilitation of injuries and sport-related illnesses. They prevent and treat chronic musculoskeletal injuries from sports, physical and occupational activity, and provide immediate care for acute injuries. Athletic trainers offer a continuum of care that is unparalleled in health care. The National Athletic Trainers’ Association represents and supports 34,000 members of the athletic training profession. Visit www.nata.org

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