

## **Knoxville Pediatric Cardiology**

### **Frequently Asked Questions about EKG Screenings**

#### **1. What is an EKG?**

An EKG is a completely painless test which evaluates the health of your heart. It measures your heart rate and electrical activity.

#### **2. What does it mean if my child's screening EKG finding indicates that further evaluation is needed?**

It may indicate the presence of a potentially serious cardiac condition that may require further follow-up testing and treatment by a physician.

#### **3. Will additional testing be needed?**

Your child's physician will determine the need for further testing and treatment.

#### **4. Will a diagnosis be made based on my child's screening EKG?**

No. A clinical diagnosis can only be made incorporating the EKG findings with a history and physical performed by a physician. If you are told your child needs additional follow up, you will receive a letter from Knoxville Pediatric Cardiology along with instructions of how to contact them for an appointment. Your child's primary care physician may also receive a copy.

#### **5. Will my child's results be shared with the school?**

Absolutely not. This is healthcare information that will only be shared with you. No information will be shared by anyone without your express written permission.

**6. If my child's screening EKG finding indicates the need for follow up evaluation and testing with a physician, does that mean he/she has a life threatening condition?**

Possibly. Very often screening EKG's will result in a "false positive" result. In other words, the person has a normal heart, but a mildly abnormal EKG. We realize that this may cause some anxiety for parents. We believe that the benefit of the potentially life-saving screening outweighs this concern. You need to decide for yourself if this risk is worth it or not.

**7. If my child's EKG is within normal limits, does this mean that they have a healthy heart?**

There are some conditions that cannot be detected with an EKG. An EKG can only detect 60% of those at risk for sudden cardiac arrest. Until further testing is available this is the best tool to detect those at risk. The EKG is a supplement to your physician's evaluation of your child.

**8. If my child's EKG is within normal limits, does it need to be repeated again in future years?**

Current international recommendations are to repeat the EKG every other year through age 25.

**Related Resources**

[www.midwestheart.org](http://www.midwestheart.org)

[www.brugada.org](http://www.brugada.org)

<http://www.suddencardiacarrest.org/>

<http://www.qtsyndrome.ch/>

<http://www.4hcm.org/>

[www.parentheartwatch.org](http://www.parentheartwatch.org)