SUDDEN CARDIAC ARREST

Anyone, anytime, anywhere!
Sudden cardiac arrest (SCA) strikes without warning. The heart suddenly and unexpectedly stops beating. SCA strikes indiscriminately, anyone, even when they appear healthy, can be affected anytime, anywhere.

The first sign
A player collapses on the pitch but there has been no contact with another player.

Unresponsive
The player is unconscious and unresponsive.

Breathing
Ignore breathing signs, whether normal, abnormal or absent, a player may be suffering a SCA even if they are breathing normally.

Seizure
Even if they are showing signs of a seizure a player may be suffering a SCA.

Locate the nearest Automated External Defibrillator (AED) and follow the instructions. If no AED is available, continue CPR until the emergency medical services arrive.

EMERGENCY STEPS

1. Recognise
SCA and the signs as soon as it happens.

2. Respond
immediately, go to the player, do not wait for the referee’s permission to enter the pitch.

3. Establish
whether the player is unconscious and unresponsive.

4. Send
someone to call the stadium medical team OR call the ambulance services.

5. Resuscitate
by using hands-only chest compressions (CPR) immediately push on the chest hard and fast.

Act fast

- If the touchline medical team responds to a player suffering a SCA with AED and defibrillation within two minutes of the collapse, their chance of survival can improve to 100%.
- Know how to recognise respond and resuscitate on the pitch.

Prevention

- Every club/stadium should have an AED which should be by or close to the pitch for all matches and training sessions – make sure you know where it is!
- All players should undergo medical assessments and have annual medical check-ups
- Create and practise a medical action plan for SCA for every match
- Take a CPR class if possible so you know how to resuscitate a player if they have a SCA
- Medical staff should closely monitor players’ health to ensure that players do not participate in training or matches when they are experiencing a virus or infection.