



**An EKG is a common screening tool for heart diseases. It is relatively inexpensive, non-invasive and easy to do. It does have some limitations. Understanding them is important to put things in proper perspective.**

**A negative EKG does not mean that you are disease free**

The EKG displays the electric activity generated by the heart and gives a snapshot of the heart rate and rhythm during the test; however it does not reflect **ALL** of the underlying problems. An EKG can identify about 70% of the causes that can lead to Sudden Cardiac Arrest.

**You may receive a false negative from an EKG**

For some patients, the EKG may be entirely normal and yet there is underlying, including serious, heart disease. An EKG is not a substitute for regular medical care or complete pre-participation sports physical. We encourage you to discuss any changes in your health or family history with your primary care physician.

**You may receive a false positive from an EKG**

You may have a finding on your EKG that is not within the normal range, but after you are fully evaluated by your doctors you will be told that you do not have a cardiac problem. Some patients have variations on their EKG that suggest disease when there isn't an abnormality found later. If your screening is abnormal, we will recommend that you immediately follow-up with your doctor who knows you and your personal and family history.

**You may receive a positive EKG that could save your life**

Sudden Cardiac Arrest or SCA is not a heart attack. It may be caused by an abnormality in the heart's electrical system or other problems leading to an abnormal heart rhythm. EKG's are not always a part of your teen's annual well-child exam or pre-participation sports physical. An EKG screening (in addition to the history and physical at your doctor's office) can help identify cardiac abnormalities that may lead to SCA. **SCREEN YOUR TEEN!**

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