

## **Attention all returning and prospective CLU athletes:**

Due to a recent recommendation by the NCAA, CLU now requires that all athletes show proof of being tested for sickle cell anemia trait. You will need to see your own healthcare provider for a blood test and attach a copy of those results to your Pre-Participation Physical Form or bring them to Health Services prior to starting your athletic season. You will not be cleared without these blood test results. If your test is positive you can still participate in athletics.

### **How does my healthcare provider test for sickle cell anemia trait?**

Please ask your healthcare provider to order a blood test for a Sickle Cell Screen. If this screening test is positive then a further blood test such as a Hemoglobinopathy Evaluation or a Hemoglobin Electrophoresis must be ordered. Remember to get a copy of the results from your healthcare provider to provide with your Physical Forms.

### **What if I was already tested for sickle cell anemia trait?**

You may have been tested as a newborn or at another time. If you have then you can provide a copy of those results instead of being tested again.

### **What if I don't want to be tested?**

If you refuse sickle cell anemia trait testing you will be required to sign a form stating that you fully release CLU of all liability relating to sickle cell anemia.

### **What is sickle cell anemia trait and why does it matter?**

*Information Highlights* (from the website of the College of American Pathologists)

- Sickle cell trait is an inherited blood disorder, which can cause serious problems during exercise.
- The sickle gene may be present most often in people of African, African-American, Mediterranean, Middle Eastern, Indian, Caribbean, South American, and Central American descent.
- Many people do not know whether or not they carry the sickle cell gene.
- During intense exertion, dehydration, and hypoxemia (decrease in oxygen), the red blood cells change their shape in the bloodstream, can block blood vessels, and can cause problems throughout the body. (*this is called "sickling"*)
- Sickling collapse has been mistaken for cardiac collapse or heat collapse.
- Signs of sickling include fatigue, difficulty breathing, leg or low back pain, and sudden weakness.
- Environmental heat, dehydration, asthma, illness, and altitude predispose an athlete with sickle trait to an onset of crisis in physical exertion.
- No sickle-trait athlete is ever disqualified from participating in sports. (*for having sickle cell trait*)
- Education and precautions can prevent sickle crises in athletes with sickle cell trait. These include adjusting exercise for the environmental temperature, emphasizing hydration, controlling asthma, no exercise if a sickle trait athlete is ill, modifying exercise upon exposure to a new altitude.