

# E-News & Updates

February 29, 2012



### SCAA Attends White House Community Briefing on Heart Health Issues

In celebration of American Heart Month, SCAA attended a Community Briefing on Cardiovascular Health Policy Issues at the White House on Friday, February 24. Jim Bachand, director of the SCAA Fredericksburg, Virginia, chapter represented the Association and while there, participated in a town hall forum and educational sessions with senior administration officials and community advocates from various other patient advocacy groups across the country. The

Community Leaders Briefing is a weekly series that began in the summer of 2011 as a unique opportunity for grassroots leaders to have a two-way dialogue with the White House about issues affecting their communities and to ensure that they are well-informed about available government programs and resources.



### **FDA: Statins to Display New Warning on Diabetes**

Cholesterol lowering drugs known as statins will now bare a new <u>warning</u> label about the risk of increased levels of blood sugar. The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) announced the label changes Tuesday. "The value of statins in preventing heart disease is indisputable, but they need to be taken

with care and knowledge of their side effects," said Amy Egan, Deputy Director of Safety in FDA's Division of Metabolism and Endocrinology Products. In its reasoning, the FDA cites several reports of patients taking statins developing higher blood sugar levels and being diagnosed with type 2 diabetes.



### **New Guidelines Issued for SCA in Student Athletes**

Under 50 percent of U.S. high schools have access to athletic trainers compared to collegiate and professional clubs who have paid staff to attend to player injuries. In an effort to assist school systems without these resources, the National Athletic Trainers Association released new guidelines on the causes and prevention of SCA in athletes. The guidelines include:

- Having an emergency response plan increases the likelihood of SCA survival
- SCA should be suspected when an athlete has collapsed and is unresponsive, instead of simply assuming the event was the result of seizure or

#### fainting

• Time is of the essence, and an athlete experiencing SCA should be shocked by an AED within five minutes of collapse.

- If serious brain injury is suspected, medical professionals should ensure adequate ventilation and elevate the head to help decrease intracranial pressure.
- In cases of heatstroke, the athlete's core body temperature must be determined soon after collapse.
- Athletes with asthma should be educated about the condition, specifically how to recognize good or bad breathing days

"These can be applied to any level of sports participation and truly help save a life," said NATA President Marjorie Albohm.

### Costly Procedure Proves No Better Outcome Than Medicine in Stable Coronary Patients



Those who experience angina predominantly after exercise or stress but not during other times are commonly diagnosed with stable coronary artery disease (CAD). While many of these patients have been treated with <u>stent implantations</u>, a new study appearing in *The Archives of Internal Medicine* proves that specific procedure yields no better results in these patients than traditional treatment methods of prescribing beta blockers, ACE inhibitors, statins and daily aspirin. In the U.S., it's estimated that more than half of those

diagnosed with stable CAD receive stents.

So, why are stent implantations so commonplace when they aren't always necessary? Lead study author Dr. David L. Brown notes "the cardiac service line can generate 40 percent of total hospital revenue, so there's incredible pressure to do more procedures." In the end, "everyone is happy - the hospital is making money, the doctor is making money... everybody except the healthcare system as a whole, which is paying more money for no better results." Stent procedures typically cost between \$30,000 to \$50,000.



# **New Consumer Web site Launched to Reduce Cardiac Device Infections**

A new Web site, *HeartDeviceInfection.com*, has been created to raise awareness of surgical site infection associated with cardiac implantable electronic devices (CIED) like pacemakers and implantable cardioverter defibrillators (ICDs). "With CIED infections growing much faster than implantations, being very expensive to treat, and having a one-year mortality

rate of 30 percent, it is very important to widely and rapidly educate patients and caregivers that there is technology available that can help prevent these infections," said Dr. Charles Kinder, Director, Heart Rhythm Program, Heart Care Centers of Illinois. The site was created by TYRX, Inc., a medical device manufacturer of drug+device products focused on infection control.

For more information about SCAA and how you can help save lives, visit www.suddencardiacarrest.org.

Mark Your Calendar and be there with SCAA for these Exciting Events!

Heart Month: February 2012

National Collegiate EMS Conference: February 24-26, 2012

EMS Today: February 28-March 3, 2012

American College of Cardiology: March 24-27, 2012

Heart Rhythm Society Annual Conference: May 9-12, 2012
National EMS Week: May 20 - 26, 2012
CPR/AED Week: June 1-7, 2012
Emergency Cardiovascular Care Update: September 11-15, 2012

SCAA 2012 Annual Meeting: September 13-15, 2012