



is a program of
Advocates for Injured Athletes



ASA Ambassador: Brittan Sutphin

Hometown: Denver, Colorado

ASA Focus: Helping to educate student athletes about the signs and symptoms of sudden cardiac arrest

Message: “Without immediate treatment from a defibrillator, an estimated 90% to 95% of SCA victims die. The rapid response of my teammate and coach and the availability of an on-site AED saved my life.”

Brittan’s Story

Brittan Sutphin had been playing competitive sports since she was five years old. A nationally ranked tennis player, she had dreams of playing college tennis. On December 5, 2008, after swimming a lap during a routine swim practice, then 16-year-old Brittan began to flop around in the water violently. She later learned that most of her teammates had assumed that she was just fooling around.

One of her teammates knew it was no joke and pulled Brittan from the water. Her swim coach administered CPR in an attempt to revive her, to no avail. Fortunately, the recreation center was equipped with an AED (automated external defibrillator).

Within moments, a lifeguard placed the AED on Brittan’s chest and followed the device’s verbal instructions. The AED shocked Brittan’s heart and, after two attempts, brought her back to life.

Following a year of testing, Brittan, her brother, and her mother were diagnosed with CPVT (catecholaminergic polymorphic ventricular tachycardia), an electrophysiological disorder that can cause sudden cardiac arrest (SCA). She had an device implanted that detects cardiac arrhythmia and is taking appropriate medication.

Since her SCA episode, Brittan has focused on actively promoting SCA education and awareness in high school sports programs and learning more about the conditions that cause SCA and other unexplained deaths. Ultimately, she wishes to become a cardiologist in her efforts to unravel the mysteries of SCA in young people. She has spent the past two summers completing a research fellowship at the Mayo Clinic in unexplained deaths in individuals under the age of 35 and is preparing to take the MCAT exam. Brittan is the founder of Youth Battling Sudden Arrhythmia Deaths, an organization focused on promoting, funding, and facilitating youth heart screening programs and AED placement at schools and sporting venues throughout Colorado.

Website
www.injuredathletes.org

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