

Testing for SCT

TOVA offers a simple blood test that can determine whether you carry the sickle cell trait. It's recommended for elite athletes and military personnel to test, especially if involved in strenuous physical activity, and for family planning.

Call 302-429-5780 ext. 120 to schedule your consultation appointment with our sickle cell team.

If You Have SCT

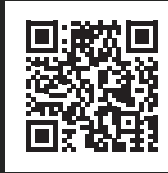
*SCT status does not preclude an individual from participating in rigorous activity.

1. **Inform Coaches/Commanding Officers:** Ensure that anyone responsible for training or safety knows your SCT status.
2. **Educate Yourself and Others:** Be proactive in understanding your condition and how SCT can impact your physical performance.
3. **Emergency Plan:** Have an action plan in place in case of health emergencies related to SCT, including recognizing early warning signs and knowing when to seek immediate medical attention.



While SCT typically doesn't cause problems in everyday life, elite athletes and military personnel need to be aware of the potential risks associated with trait status.

For more information, consult with your healthcare provider or visit our website at www.tovacommunityhealth.org



Contact Information

New Castle County

📍 TOVA Community Health
213 Greenhill Avenue, Suite B
Wilmington, DE 19805

📞 (302) 429-5870 ext. 120

Kent County

📍 Delaware State University at Capital Park
Biomedical, Behavioral, and Allied Health Center
2 North Capital Avenue
Dover, DE 19901



Your Knowledge is Your Strength.



TOVA Community Health

www.tovacommunityhealth.org



Safe Exercise For Sickle Cell Trait (SCT)

A Guide for Elite Athletes
& Warfighters



What is SCT?

Sickle Cell Trait (SCT) is a genetic condition in which a person carries one copy of the sickle cell gene. Unlike sickle cell disease (SCD), individuals with SCT typically don't experience the severe symptoms of the disease, but they can pass the trait on to their children. While SCT often does not cause problems under normal conditions, intense physical stress - such as strenuous exercise, dehydration, or high altitude- may trigger complications.

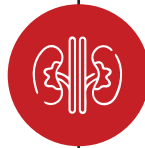
Key Facts

- **Prevalence:** 1 in 12 African Americans and 1 in 100 individuals of Hispanic, Mediterranean, Middle Eastern and Indian ancestry carry the trait.
- **Not A Disease:** SCT is not the same as SCD.
- **Symptoms:** Most do not experience symptoms unless under extreme conditions (intense and repetitious exercise, dehydration, heat, and lack of oxygen).

Risks

While SCT does not cause issues during normal activities, elite athletes and military personnel may face unique risks during intense physical exertion and when under extreme environmental conditions.

Potential Risks Include:



Rhabdomyolysis:

Muscle cramping caused by muscle breakdown which may cause kidney damage.



Dehydration:

Common during intense physical activity, and may increase the risk of complications for those with SCT.



Heat Stroke:

Extreme heat and humidity increase the risk of heat-related illness for individuals with SCT.



Altitude Illness:

Lack of oxygen at high altitudes can trigger complications for those with SCT, leading to symptoms such as dizziness, shortness of breath, and fatigue.

Signs to Watch For

- Unusual muscle pain or weakness
- Inability to catch one's breath
- Chest pain
- Excessive fatigue

Precautions for Elite Athletes & Warfighters with SCT

- **Hydration is Key:** Drink plenty of fluids before, during, and after exercise or physical activity.
- **Warm-Up and Cool Down:** Avoid sudden, intense physical activity. Gradually warm up and cool down to prevent muscle strain.
- **Monitor Heat Exposure:** Avoid extreme heat, and rest in a cool place during intense physical activity. Use cooling techniques if necessary.
- **Altitude Adaptation:** Be mindful of your body's response to high altitudes. Take it easy and allow your body to acclimatize.
- **Know Your Limits:** Listen to your body. If you feel unwell, cease activity and seek medical help.
- **Regular Medical Check-Ups:** Keep track of your health status and check in routinely with your healthcare provider.