

Cardiologist urges sudden cardiac arrest readiness improvements nationwide

It has been just over one year since the Buffalo Bills' Damar Hamlin collapsed on the field during an NFL game against the Cleveland Browns. The incident shocked the nation and drew attention to the issue of athletes and sudden cardiac arrest (SCA). Adding still more visibility into SCA, in July 2023, the son of NBA star LeBron James, Bronny James, suffered an SCA during practice with his basketball team at the University of Southern California. The younger James only recently resumed playing college games.

As people reflect on Hamlin's injury as we pass its anniversary, Atrium Health Sanger Heart & Vascular Institute sports cardiologist Dr. Dermot Phelan, who serves as the cardiology consultant to the National Football League and Major League Baseball scouting combines and is a member of the Cardiac Screening Advisory Committee for both the NFL and the NBA, says many high schools, colleges and universities – and even some professional sports teams – are not fully prepared for an SCA event.

"At a minimum, every high school, college, university and professional team should have readily available automated external defibrillators (AEDs), medically trained staff and an emergency response plan in place to be fully prepared for a sudden cardiac arrest," said Phelan. "Unfortunately, there is wide variation across the nation in terms of preparedness."

Phelan offers this readiness assessment:

- Professional sports: In many ways, these teams are setting the standard for the nation. For example, there are nearly 30 medical team members present and prepared at every NFL game. They are carefully rehearsed and understand their role in the event of an emergency.
- Colleges and universities: There is significant variation from one college to the next in access to AEDs, trained staff on site and having emergency response plans in place.
- High schools: There is wide variation in high schools due, in large part, to the fact that only 20 states have passed laws requiring AEDs and trained staff at sporting events.

As a point of reference to understand the risk, The National Center for Sports Injury Research has tracked SCA numbers in the NCAA and National Federation of State High Schools for the past 40 years. SCA accounts for about one-third of all catastrophic injuries. However, not all athletes have the same risk of experiencing SCA, as Black male athletes are more likely to suffer from an SCA event.

"This is an incredibly concerning disparity," said Phelan. "It is imperative that we bridge these gaps through consistent policies and equitable resources to ensure that every athlete – regardless of their age, sport or level of play – receives the protection they deserve."

Based on existing research and his experience, Phelan urges the public to do the following:

- Ask their school principals or college administrators if AEDs are at all athletic facilities and if there are trained staff in place for all games.
- Call on their state and federal representatives to pass laws requiring AEDs and trained staff at all facilities and games.
- Advocate for a new school policy that requires all high school students be trained in CPR before graduation.

"Damar Hamlin and Bronny James were fortunate to get immediate emergency lifesaving care," said Phelan. "In the vast majority of SCA cases that happen at recreational facilities across the country, defibrillators are not used, even when they are available. This speaks to the importance of a coordinated, national campaign to have AEDs on-site, trained staff available and an emergency response plan in place."



The Month of January

January was named for the Roman god Janus, known as the protector of gates and doorways, who symbolize beginnings and endings. Janus is depicted with two faces, one looking into the past, the other with the ability to see into the future. What a fitting symbol for this first day of the year; this month is our door into the New Year.

January Calendar

- January 1 is New Year's Day.
- January 6 is Epiphany. According to the New Testament's Gospels, on this date, the Magi - the three wise men or kings - venerated and brought gifts to the infant Jesus.
- January 15 is Martin Luther King Jr. Day (observed). This holiday is held on the third Monday in January and honors the principles of this civil rights leader and Nobel Prize Winner dedicated to nonviolence.
- January 17 is Benjamin Franklin's birthday. He was not only a world-renowned statesman, inventor, and scientist but was also fascinated by agriculture.
- January 25 full Wolf Moon.

January's birthstone, the garnet, is thought to keep the wearer safe during travel. A great amount of folklore surrounds the garnet, stemming from a diverse range of cultures and time periods. One common thread is the idea that garnet protects its wearer from harm.

January's birth flowers are the carnation and snowdrop.

Church

ONGOING

Schedule

At New Hope Methodist Church, Hwy 742 South. Preaching 1st & 3rd Sun, 9:45am. Sun School 1st & 3rd Sun, 10:45am - 2nd & 4th Sun, 9:45am

Come Worship With Us

At New Life Church, 600 Camden Road in Wadesboro w/Pastor Chris Jackson. Sun-10:30am & Wed-6:30pm

Mass Schedule

All welcome to services at Sacred Heart Catholic Mission in Wadesboro. Masses every Sun-8:30am, Thur-6pm & Sat-9am

Events

JANUARY 16

Board of Commissioners Meet

6pm in Board Room, Suite 209, in Government Center, 101 S Greene St in uptown Wadesboro. Meetings are available online at [youtube.com](https://www.youtube.com), search for Anson Commissioners. To appear, sign up prior to meeting. Info 704-994-3201.

ONGOING EVENTS

Senior Cafe

4th Thursday each month, 2:30-3:30pm at Grace Senior Center, 199 Highway 742 South, Wadesboro, just past IGA. Info 704-694-6616.

Free Food

Distribution at Feed My Lambs every Tuesday, Thursday & Friday, 1-4pm. Located at 2290 Hwy 74 West, Wadesboro. 704-695-1820

Writers' Club Meets

Fourth Sunday each month at First Presbyterian Church in Wadesboro, 3pm (except July & Dec). Open to public, new members of all ages invited. Info 704-694-5211 or sandybruney@gmail.com

Lions Club Welcomes

New Members The Wadesboro Lions Club meets at Papa Joes Restaurant the 2nd & 4th Thursday each month at 6:30pm For more info or to purchase a broom please call Jim Chandler 910-571-1448

Healthcare.gov Open Enrollment Ends January 16

The NC Navigator Consortium welcomes the start of Open Enrollment for the Health Insurance Marketplace at [Healthcare.gov](https://www.healthcare.gov), with a team of dedicated Navigators ready to help North Carolinians in all 100 counties get covered in the new year. While Open Enrollment lasts until Jan. 16, 2024, the NC Navigator Consortium's statewide network of health insurance Navigators offer FREE of charge services year-round,, answering questions about health coverage, helping consumers update their HealthCare.gov policies and enroll in new ones after qualifying life events, with 80% of enrollees finding coverage for less than \$10 a month.

Folks who need coverage starting Jan. 1, 2024, will need to apply by Dec. 15, 2023. The NC Navigator Consortium's federally qualified health insurance Navigators are available by free appointments (by phone, in person or virtually) to provide local help to consumers needing to apply for, or update, their Marketplace coverage. Appointments may be scheduled by calling 1-855-733-3711 or online at [NCNavigator.net](https://www.ncnavigator.net).

The NC Navigator Consortium connects North Carolinians with qualified health plans that provide essential healthcare, preventive care, mental health care, ER care and maternity coverage, not limited by caps or pre-existing conditions. Our certified Navigators help North Carolinians maximize their coverage by:

- Taking time with consumers to help avoid mistakes.
- Presenting all options and ensuring their providers are in-network.
- Explaining terminology and processes to help increase health insurance literacy.
- Assisting consumers with estimating their income for the year ahead, one of the most difficult parts of the HealthCare.gov application process.

This year they are excited to welcome the expansion of Medicaid in North Carolina. Starting Dec. 1, 2023, North Carolinians between the ages of 19 and 64 could be eligible for Medicaid even if they didn't qualify in previous years. NC Medicaid covers most health services -- including doctor visits, checkups, emergency care, hospital services, maternity and postpartum care, vision and hearing services, prescription drugs, behavioral health, preventative and wellness services, devices, and more. There's no monthly fee and copays are never more than \$4.

The NC Navigator Consortium is the only federally funded entity of its kind in North Carolina, supported in part by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, the Kate B. Reynolds Charitable Trust and Cone Health Foundation. Learn more at [ncnavigator.net](https://www.ncnavigator.net), and follow them on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram. Members of the Consortium are Mountain Projects Inc., Access East, Charlotte Center for Legal Advocacy, Council on Aging of Buncombe County, Cumberland HealthNET, HealthCare Access, HealthNet Gaston, Kintegra Health, NC Field and Pisgah Legal Services. The Consortium is led by Legal Aid of North Carolina.

Legal Aid of North Carolina is a statewide, nonprofit law firm that provides free legal services in civil matters to low-income people in order to ensure equal access to justice and to remove legal barriers to economic opportunity. Learn more at [legalaidnc.org](https://www.legalaidnc.org). Follow them on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn and YouTube.

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