



## **The Right Workout for Those With Congenital Heart Defects**

TUESDAY, June 8, 2003 (HealthDayNews) -- Children, teens and young adults with genetic heart disease can exercise recreationally but need to get advice from their doctors about the kinds of physical activity that are safe, a new American Heart Association scientific statement recommends.

The statement, published in the June 7 issue of *Circulation*, is meant to help doctors counsel patients who have an increased risk for sudden death while they're doing physical activity.

This includes people with a number of kinds of genetic heart disease such as: hypertrophic cardiomyopathy; arrhythmogenic right ventricular cardiomyopathy; Marfan syndrome; and ion channel diseases, including long QT syndrome, Brugada syndrome and catecholaminergic polymorphic ventricular tachycardia.

The statement was prepared by the Working Groups of the American Heart Association Committee on Exercise, Cardiac Rehabilitation and Prevention, and the councils on Clinical Cardiology and Cardiovascular Disease in the Young.

"This document does not address organized competitive sports, including community sports teams, school and professional sports. Rather, it covers what these patients can do in a wide range of recreational, sporting and physical activities outside the competitive arena," Dr. Barry J. Maron, association committee chairman and director of the Hypertrophic Cardiomyopathy Center, Minneapolis Heart Institute Foundation, said in a prepared statement.

The statement makes it clear that people with these genetic heart diseases can and should exercise.

"The impetus of the document is to emphasize that the mere presence of a genetic cardiovascular disease should not be regarded as a reason to be sedentary. Instead, this document tries to discern which exercises are preferable and which should be avoided, as well as help clinicians make decisions about how they advise their patients when it comes to recreational exercise," Maron said.

### **More information**

The American Heart Association has more information about congenital heart disease ([www.americanheart.org](http://www.americanheart.org) ).

--Robert Preidt

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