



Star football player saved

Matt Nader's Story

Matt Nader's heart went into ventricular fibrillation during a football game.

It was an important game against a major rival. All day he felt unusually nervous about the game. He couldn't shake it. One of his co-captains tried to joke with him before the game, sensing that Matt wasn't his usual self. He was pensive and felt tired waiting on the sidelines.

Matt remembers going to the sidelines and taking his place on the bench. He asked his coach if he did okay. Did he make his block? His coach told him he did. Matt began to feel a burning sensation in his chest. His vision blurred, and that's the last thing he remembered. He had fallen straight backwards when he lost consciousness. His legs were still up on the bench. His skin was clammy, dusky. His curly hair was soaking wet.

Matt's parents rushed from the stands to the sideline to assist. Not feeling a pulse, they began to administer CPR. The parent of another player on the team and a cardiologist called for the automated external defibrillator that the school had purchased four years earlier and

always traveled with the team. After the defibrillator was activated and provided a shock, Matt was breathing again on his own.

Within two days of getting his implantable cardioverter defibrillator (ICD), Matt was back in school. A couple of days later he joined state representative Donna Howard to testify before the University Interscholastic League (UIL) medical advisory board to ask that AEDs be mandatory for all UIL events. Then he was asked to join Lieutenant Governor David Dewhurst at a press conference to announce legislation to get funding for at least one AED in every public school.

Matt quotes Nietzsche, when he says "what doesn't kill you makes you stronger."

Adapted from a guest column by Dr. Barbara Bergin for SCAA.

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