

MALIK ALLEN
MISSED HIS HEART
APPOINTMENT AT
SCHOOL. FOUR
MONTHS LATER
HE SUFFERED
CARDIAC ARREST



Malik Allen, 14, of Chicago's Luther North College Prep was playing basketball at Ida Crown Jewish Academy when he collapsed and suffered sudden cardiac arrest while sitting on the bench. Luckily, a baseball coach in the stands immediately jumped into action and administered CPR and used an AED to revive the teen.

Malik's mother, Ms. Alberta Price, is thankful beyond words that her son is alive.

"Thanks be to God for that coach for doing what he did to save my son."

Diagnosed with **hypertrophic cardiomyopathy**, the #1 cause of sudden cardiac death in young athletes, Malik has returned home from the hospital with a new piece of hardware—an implanted defibrillator—to prevent future episodes.

What's striking about this story is that Luther North's Athletic Director David Grim was well aware of the high risk of sudden cardiac arrest in young athletes and took the measures to protect his students.

In September of 2016, Wimbledon Health Partners performed cardiovascular testing at the school. Alberta made sure her son was registered for testing, but Malik did not end up making it to his appointment.

Alberta wants to share her son's story to serve as a lesson for others:

"Parents, please listen:

Do not take for granted that your son or daughter is healthy. If your school offers cardiac testing, do it. Make sure your child goes. And if your school doesn't offer it, tell them you think they should. So many kids are dying out there . . . I know I could have lost my son."

Sudden cardiac arrest knows no bounds. It can happen to anyone at any time. Preventative testing is necessary to protect young athletes. EKGs in conjunction with echocardiograms will detect hypertrophic cardiomyopathy. Relying on symptoms and warning signs will not.

Malik is now on the road to recovery, but he is aware that a missed appointment could have cost him his life. And there is not a moment when Alberta doesn't think about what would have happened had Malik not been at the right place at the right time under the care of people who knew what to do.

