

Long QT Syndrome—

Knowing when and how to get tested could save many lives

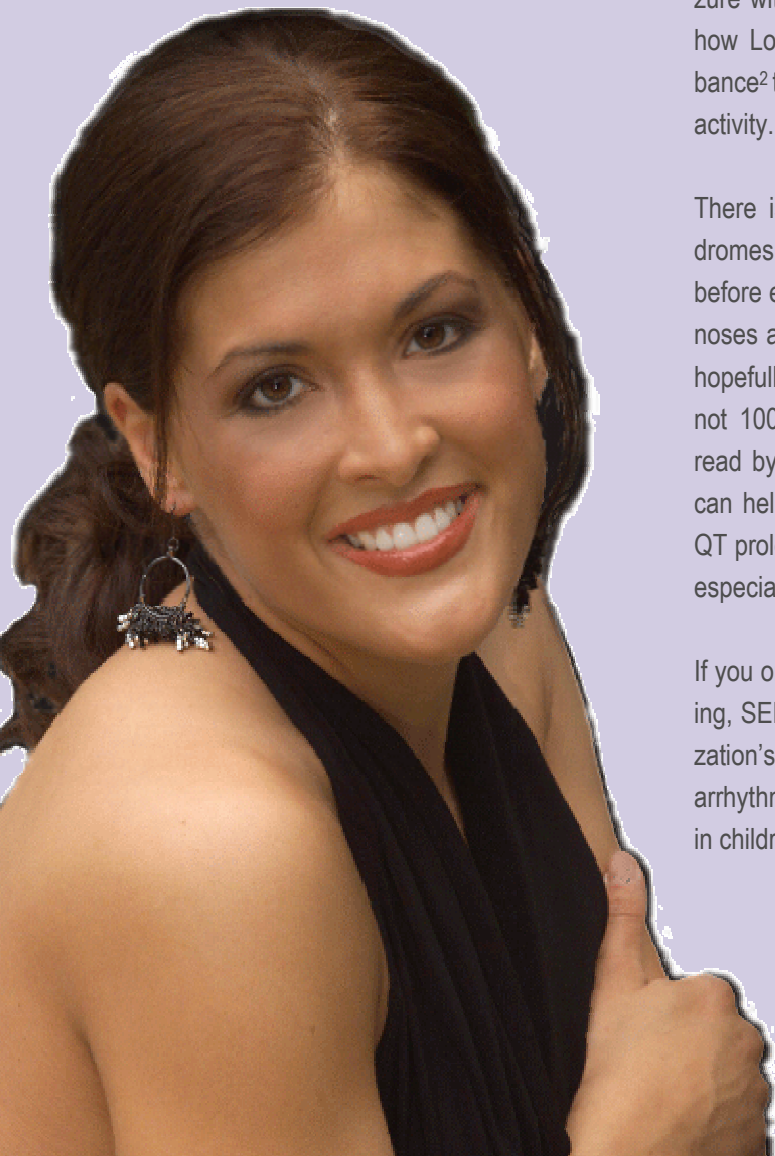
Michaela Gagne, Miss Massachusetts 2006, has LongQT Syndrome, a life-threatening heart condition that causes sudden death and takes the lives of 3,000 children and young adults each year, often without warning¹

A high school star athlete drops suddenly on the basketball court. A cheerleader has unexplained dizziness, then suffers a grand mal seizure with the excitement of being asked out on her first date. This is how LongQT Syndrome manifests. It's an inherited electrical disturbance² that can be triggered by extreme emotions or intense physical activity.

There is no mandatory screening for LongQT or other similar syndromes in children, and most schools don't require routine screening before engaging in sports. The good news is that LongQT can be diagnosed and treated, just like Michaela has been. Ongoing research will hopefully tell us soon of better ways to identify those at risk. Though not 100%, having a simple electrocardiogram (EKG) that has been read by a cardiologist, not a computer, along with a medical history, can help detect this serious arrhythmia. Studies demonstrate greater QT prolongation and more severe outcomes in young females¹, so it is especially important to recognize in women.

If you or anyone you know experiences unexplained dizziness or fainting, SEEK MEDICAL ADVISEMENT. Please visit the following organization's websites to learn more about LongQT Syndrome and other arrhythmias. Find out how you can help end preventable sudden death in children and young adults. Take care of your heart!

- www.mayoclinic.com
- www.parentheartwatch.org
- www.qtdrugs.org
- www.sads.org
- www.sids.org
- www.womensheart.org



1. "Long QT syndrome family of Cardiac Ion Channelopathies: A Huge review". Genetics in Medicine, Mar 2006, Vol 8; No 3

2. Long QT can also be "Acquired" through the use of certain medicines and supplements (especially in combination), with specific medical conditions like heart failure or cirrhosis, or with potassium depletion.

