



USE OF MEDICATIONS & RISKS OF SUPPLEMENTS

Checking Medications

Both prescribed and over-the-counter medications should be checked against the Prohibited List. Athletes should also inform their doctors and other medical professionals of their obligations as high-performance athletes and emphasize the fact that they are subject to the rules of the World Anti-Doping Code.

We recommend using Global Drug Reference Online ([Global DRO](#)) to check all medications. Global DRO provides athletes and Athlete Support Personnel with information about the prohibited status of specific medications based on the current WADA Prohibited List.

Here are a few tips and tricks to help athletes and Athlete Support Personnel navigate the Prohibited List and be able to select medications that are safe to take within the context of sport:

- Only the medical ingredient names are listed on the Prohibited List - not brand names
- Always check dosage restrictions, route administration of the medicine and any limitations for the use of the drug based on gender
- Check both over-the-counter and prescription medications before using them
- Inform your medical professional that you are an athlete and subject to anti-doping regulations
- Different substances take different amounts of time to leave your system –take that into account when taking substances prohibited in-competition

- Be careful when substituting one brand of medication for another – they may contain different medical ingredients
- Be careful when travelling – the same brand of a medication may contain different medical ingredients abroad
- Regularly check for updates to the Prohibited List

Risks of Supplements

Extreme caution is recommended regarding supplement use. A number of positive tests have been attributed to the misuse of supplements, poor labelling and supplement contamination. There is no 100% guarantee that a supplement is free from prohibited substances but there are ways to significantly minimize the risks.

Here are some of the risks:

- Manufacturing standards, which are often less strict when compared with medicines. These lower standards often lead to supplement contamination at production facilities;
- Fake or low-quality products, which may contain prohibited substances and other substances that are harmful to health;
- Mislabelling of supplements – ingredients listed in the wrong dosage, or not at all identified on the product label;
- False claims that a particular supplement is endorsed by Anti-Doping Organizations or that it is “safe for athletes”. Anti-Doping Organizations do not certify supplements – this is done by independent companies.

All athletes should do a risk-benefit assessment if they are considering to use supplements. The first step of such an assessment is to consider whether a “food-first” approach meets the athlete’s needs. Whenever possible, such assessment should be done with a support of a certified nutritionist who is familiar with the anti-doping system.

Checking your Supplements

If, after careful consideration, an athlete chooses to use supplements, they must take the necessary steps to minimize the risks. This includes:

- Select supplements only when a benefit is likely – this should be done with the assistance of a certified nutritionist who can properly assess the athlete’s needs
- Use supplements and doses that are safe. Select supplements that have been batch-tested by an independent company. Companies that batch-test supplements include [Informed Sport](#), [Certified for Sport](#) or [Kölner Liste](#).