



Use of Medications & Risks of Supplements Use

Checking Medications

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 World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) Prohibited List.

Here are a few tips and tricks to help athletes and Athlete Support Personnel navigate the Prohibited List and to 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 the 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 or contamination of dietary supplements, and there is no guarantee that a supplement is free from prohibited substances.

Risks of supplements include:

- Manufacturing standards, which are often less strict compared with medicines. These lower standards often lead to supplement contamination with an undeclared prohibited substance;
- Fake or low-quality products which may contain prohibited substances – and be harmful to health;
- Mislabelling of supplements with ingredients wrongly listed and prohibited substances not identified on the product label;
- Misleading and false claims that a particular supplement is endorsed by Anti-Doping Organisations or that it is “safe for athletes”. Anti-Doping Organisations do not certify supplements.

All athletes should do a risk-benefit assessment if they are considering the 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 or other qualified professional who is familiar with the global and IHF Anti-Doping Rules.



Checking Supplements

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

- Thorough research on the type and dose of the supplement, preferably with the advice of a certified nutritionist or other qualified professional who is familiar with the global and IHF Anti-Doping Rules.
- Selecting only those supplements that have been batch-tested by an independent company. Companies that batch-test supplements include [Informed Sport](#), [Certified for Sport](#) or [Kölner Liste](#).

Remember, no supplement is 100% risk-free but athletes and Athlete Support Personnel can take certain steps to minimise these risks.

For more information, please watch this [ITA webinar](#) on nutritional supplements.