

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 emphasise 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 World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) Prohibited List.

Risk 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. There is no guarantee that any 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
- **False claims** that a particular supplement is endorsed by ADOs or that it is “safe for athletes”. Remember, ADOs do not certify supplements and product labels may contain misleading messaging.

Risk-benefit assesment

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

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