

## Athlete and Athlete Support Personnel Guide to the 2026 Prohibited List

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### What is the Prohibited List?

**The List** is the International Standard that identifies substances and methods that are prohibited (banned) in sport. Updates to the List are published on WADA's website every year on 1 October and come into effect on 1 January of the following year.

### How are substances and methods added to the List?

1. The substance can or has the potential to enhance performance. For example, substances that unnaturally promote muscle growth or improve endurance.
2. The substance represents an actual or potential health risk. For example, the misuse of certain substances might lead to short or long-term health problems.
3. The substance violates the spirit of sport. This means that using it goes against the values of clean sport - fairness, respect and integrity.

### What is strict liability?

Did you know that even accidental use of a prohibited substance or method could result in an Anti-Doping Rule Violation and possibly a sanction? Athletes are responsible for any banned substance they use or attempt to use, or that is found in their body, regardless of how the substance got there. This is called the principle of strict liability. Athletes and their support personnel need to be able to identify banned substances and methods that are included on the List in order to reduce the risk of unintentional doping.

Athlete Support Personnel (ASP) can be sanctioned for anti-doping rule violations as well. This includes, but is not limited to the following:

- Administer or attempt to administer a banned substance.
- Administer or attempt to administer a banned method.
- Have a banned substance or method in their possession without any medical justification.

### Does the List contain the name of every specific banned substance?

For most categories, the substances listed are only examples of the types of substances that would be included in those categories, so what is in the List is not exhaustive. These cases can be identified with phrases like "included but not limited to," or "other substances with similar chemical structure or similar biological effect(s)."

## Navigating the List

The List is organized into specific classes and categories to clarify the types of substances or methods banned in sport. These categories are labeled starting with S for banned Substances (S0 through S9), M for banned Methods (M1 through M3), and P for substances banned in Particular Sports (P1).

It's also critical to know when a substance or method is banned: some are banned at all times (in and out of competition), while others are only banned in competition, or even in particular sports.

- **Banned at all times:** Substances and methods that are banned at all times, both in and out of competition, regardless of when testing occurs. The following classes of substances are banned at all time:
  - **S0. Non-approved Substances** (e.g., experimental or designer drugs)
  - **S1. Anabolic Agents** (e.g., anabolic steroids)
  - **S2. Peptide Hormones, Growth Factors, and Mimetics** (e.g., EPO, Human Growth Hormone)
  - **S3. Beta-2 Agonists** (e.g., salmeterol)
  - **S4. Hormone and Metabolic Modulators** (e.g., insulin)
  - **S5. Diuretics and Masking Agents** (e.g., water pills)
- **Banned in competition:** Means the substance or method is only prohibited during a competition period, usually starting at 11:59 p.m. the day before an event and ending after post-competition testing is complete. Use outside of this window may be permitted, but athletes are responsible for ensuring it's not present in their system during competition. The following classes of substances are banned in competition only:
  - **S6. Stimulants** (e.g., cocaine)
  - **S7. Narcotics** (e.g., morphine, fentanyl)
  - **S8. Cannabinoids** (e.g., compounds found in cannabis and similar synthetic products)
  - **S9. Glucocorticoids** (e.g., cortisol, prednisone)
- **Banned in particular sports:** Refers to substances or methods that are only prohibited in specific sports because they could provide an unfair advantage based on the nature of the sport. These are not universally banned across all sports, but are restricted where they could impact skill, precision, or safety. The following class of substances are banned in particular sports:
  - **P1. Beta-Blockers** (e.g., propranolol)
- **Banned methods:** A banned method is a way or technique of doing something that alters the body or the integrity of the anti-doping process. Banned methods include:
  - **M1. Manipulation of Blood and Blood Components** (e.g., blood transfusions)
  - **M2. Chemical and Physical Manipulation** (e.g., urine substitution, intravenous infusion)
  - **M3. Gene and Cell Doping** (e.g., gene editing or the use of genetically modified cells)

All use of methods listed under banned methods must be cross-referenced with the List. For example, using intravenous infusions is limited to 100 mL every 12 hours, unless you are officially receiving them during hospital treatment, surgery, or clinical diagnostic tests.

## Athletes and their ASP must take note that it does not matter when a substance is taken

If a substance is banned in-competition and is found in an athlete's sample (collected in-competition), the athlete may be sanctioned, even if the substance was taken out of competition.

### What has changed in the 2026 List?

Now let's dive into what has changed in the 2026 List.

#### Inhaled salmeterol

The dosing rules for inhaled salmeterol have changed.

**Is it allowed?** Yes - if you follow the new dosing rules. The maximum allowed dose of inhaled salmeterol is still 200 micrograms in a 24-hour period. However, starting January 1, 2026, this maximum dose cannot be taken at once. It will need to be divided into a minimum of 2 doses. Any single dose must not exceed 100 micrograms over an 8-hour period.

#### When is it banned?

- Inhaled salmeterol is banned at all times above the permitted dose.
- It is banned when taken above the maximum allowed dose of 200 micrograms within a 24-hour period.
- It is banned when the maximum allowed dose is not taken in a minimum of two doses.
- It is banned when any one dose exceeds 100 micrograms within an 8-hour period.

#### Before January 1, 2026

Maximum of 200 micrograms over a 24-hour period. No advisement on divided doses provided. Banned at all times. However, when taken by inhalation at the permitted dose, it will not result in a positive doping test.

#### After January 1, 2026

Maximum of 200 micrograms over a 24-hour period. Divided doses should not exceed 100 micrograms over 8 hours for any dose. Banned at all times. However, when taken by inhalation at the permitted dose, with no individual dose exceeding 100 micrograms, it will not result in a positive doping test.

#### Blood donation and withdrawal

Donating blood or blood components (such as plasma, red blood cells, white blood cells, platelets and peripheral blood stem cells) is allowed. However, it must be done in a collection center that is accredited by the relevant regulatory authority in your country. The only other blood withdrawal that is allowed is for analytical purposes, including medical tests or Doping Control.

**Permitted\***

- Blood donation (whole blood or plasma/platelet components) at a collection center accredited by the relevant regulatory authority.
- Blood withdrawal for routine Doping Control tests.
- Blood withdrawal for medical testing or laboratory analysis.

**Banned\*\***

- The withdrawal of blood or blood components for purposes other than donation, doping control or medical tests.
- The withdrawal of blood or blood components for donation purposes outside an accredited donation center.
- The administration or reintroduction of any quantity of blood or red blood cell products into the circulatory system.

**Be sure to keep a record** \*Any blood donation should be declared on your Doping Control Form. \*\*Blood transfusions are always prohibited. If an athlete needs a blood transfusion, they will need a TUE.

## Re-breathing systems & carbon monoxide

**Caution**

The use of re-breathing systems or equipment to deliver carbon monoxide is now banned. It is a prohibited method unless it is used as a diagnostic procedure under the supervision of a medical or scientific professional. This method is considered a form of blood manipulation and is not allowed in any circumstances. Use of this method could result in an ADRV, including a potential four-year period of ineligibility.

**What does this mean for athletes?**

Athletes cannot use carbon monoxide rebreathing systems at will. They are only permitted for diagnostic reasons (like measuring blood oxygen capacity) under strict supervised conditions.

## Genetically modified cells

The use of normal or genetically modified cells or cell components (parts of a cell, such as nuclei, mitochondria, or ribosomes) is banned. This update clarifies what genetic manipulation methods are banned in sport.

**What does this mean for athletes?**

This expanded scope encompasses not only the complete cell structure but also its key functional organelles. This update is added to prevent the misuse of genetically modified cells or their organelles for purposes of performance enhancement.

## Glucocorticoid washout table

Glucocorticoids are prohibited only in competition and when taken prior to competition, particularly during the washout period, it may result in a positive anti-doping test in competition.

Athletes are reminded that they need to be cautious when using Glucocorticoids out of

competition in case they are still in their system in competition and consequently may return a positive test. To help athletes manage this, a Glucocorticoid Washout Table was created that provides useful information as to the 'anticipated' time taken for the substances to leave an athlete's system. In 2026, further information has been added related to the use of sustained-release glucocorticoid formulations. These may result in glucocorticoids being detected in a test past the washout period as they can take longer to clear the body. Therefore, athletes need to take extra care and consider the timing of use prior to any competition.

Use of sustained-release glucocorticoid formulations may result in detectable glucocorticoid levels past the washout period due to prolonged systemic absorption.

### What does this mean for athletes?

If you were to be prescribed sustained-release (long-acting) glucocorticoids, the medication might stay in your system and be detectable even after the standard washout time is over. This is because the body takes longer to absorb and eliminate it fully. You can refer to the GCC washout table below for further clarification:

Route	Glucocorticoid	Washout period
Oral *	All glucocorticoids 2 <i>Except: triamcinolone; triamcinolone acetoneide</i>	3 days 10 days
Intramuscular**	Betamethasone; dexamethasone; methylprednisone Prednisolone; prednisone Triamcinolone	5 days 10 days 60 days
Local injections** (including periarticular, intra-articular, peritendinous and intratendinous)	All glucocorticoids <i>Except: Prednisolone; prednisone triamcinolone acetoneide; triamcinolone hexacetoneide</i>	3 days 10 days
Rectal	All glucocorticoids <i>Except: triamcinolone diacetate; triamcinolone acetoneide</i>	3 days 10 days

\* Oral routes also include e.g. oromucosal, buccal, gingival and sublingual.

\*\*Use of sustained-release glucocorticoid formulations may result in detectable glucocorticoid levels past the washout period due to prolonged systemic absorption.

If you have more questions about GCCs, you can consult our [Athlete/ASP factsheet](#).

### Why should you be familiar with the List and next steps

It is possible that an athlete's medication may contain a banned substance. Athletes and their ASP should seek medical advice from a qualified medical professional and check their medications against the List, before taking anything.

## Therapeutic Use Exemptions

### What happens if an athlete has to use a medication that is banned in sport?

Athletes with a legitimate medical condition may need to use medications that contain a banned substance or use a banned method. If specific criteria are met, athletes may be granted a Therapeutic Use Exemption (TUE). Common examples of TUEs include treatment for ADHD, asthma medications, or insulin for diabetes. A TUE can be approved for banned substances or methods only if:

- The medication is necessary to treat a diagnosed medical condition.
- It won't enhance athletic performance beyond normal state of health.
- There's no allowed alternative treatment available.
- The need for the medication isn't caused by earlier use of the substance without a TUE.

TUEs are granted for a set period of time, dose, frequency, and route of administration.

### More information

For more general information on TUEs visit the [WADA website](#).

### Athletes should apply to the appropriate organization if they need a TUE

Anti-Doping Organizations (NADOs) approve TUEs for national-level athletes. These are valid at any national-level event, in any country. International Federations (IFs) approve TUEs for international-level athletes. These are valid at the international level.

## Next steps...

Athletes and their ASP should take the following steps to continue to uphold clean sport and comply with the 2026 Prohibited List.

### Familiarize yourself with the List

Athletes and ASP should ensure they are familiar with the 2026 List and its changes. Tip: Check the List [here](#) and consult the [summary of changes](#) for a deeper dive.

### Check your medication

Athletes who take medications regularly or occasionally should check their medication against the 2026 List. Tip: Remember, not all banned substances are included in the List by name. For some categories, the substances listed are only examples of the types of substances that would be included in those categories, so what is in the List is not exhaustive.

### Apply for a TUE if necessary

Athletes who need to take a banned substance or method should contact their ADO to apply for a TUE. Similarly, athletes who take a medication that has changed status (is now banned) should contact their ADO to apply for a TUE. Tip: All athletes who have a TUE should check the expiry date and ensure that it is still valid, if not, they should apply for a new TUE.