

WARNING regarding Use of Supplements – British Weight Lifting Guidelines November 2014

These guidelines apply to all athletes and support personnel (coaches, sports scientists and medical professionals) involved in Weight Lifting and Para-Powerlifting who enter domestic and/or international competition at any level of the sport.

Supplements may put YOU at risk of an Anti-Doping Rule Violation

All athletes – elite or otherwise, and all athlete support personnel, are warned that use of dietary/nutritional supplements puts you at risk of an anti-doping rule violation.

WHY?

Nutritional supplements are not strictly regulated in the same way as pharmaceutical medicines. As a result, there is an increased risk these products might contain substances which are prohibited but not listed on the label. Furthermore, a banned ingredient in a supplement may be listed on the product label under a different or proprietary name making it difficult to identify as prohibited. Counterfeit products are known to exist, particularly on the internet.

Supplement production may have low quality control due to the absence of regulation, increasing the risk of contamination from banned substances. Evidence shows that the rate of contamination of supplements widely available to purchase in the UK, Europe and USA is between 10 and 25%^{1.i}. Approximately 44% of anti-doping positive tests in the UK in 2012 are thought to have been the consequence of prohibited substances in supplements.

Consider these known risks and consequences before recommending or consuming supplements.

Anti-Doping Rule Violations (ADRV) –new criteria apply from 1 January 2015

Weight Lifting and Para-Powerlifting disciplines are governed by the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) policy of “**STRICT PERSONAL LIABILITY.**” This means that **EACH INDIVIDUAL ATHLETE** is **SOLELY RESPONSIBLE** for **ANY** substance they consume or is found in their body, **EVEN IF TAKEN INADVERTENTLY**. The principle of ‘Strict Personal Liability’ is particularly relevant where nutritional supplements are concerned, where the risk of inadvertently consuming banned substances is higher.

From 1 January 2015, an athlete who engages in conduct which he or she knew constituted an anti-doping rule violation, or **knew that there was a significant risk** that conduct might result in an ADRV and **manifestly disregarded that risk**, may be found to have intentionally committed a doping offence. The sanction from 1 January 2015 for intentional doping is four years ineligibility.

Athlete Support Personnel should be aware that they risk committing an anti-doping violation if they are found to have assisted or incited an athlete to commit an ADRV. Take care with advice you offer to an athlete. Keep records of advice given to athletes. Remember the Prohibited List is not a complete list of what is prohibited, it includes examples only. Simple vitamin, mineral, herbal and/or

¹ HFL Sport Science, 2014; Cologne Study 2004.

natural products are not immune from contamination. Apps and websites are available to check permitted medications. Keep records of your research!

So what are Supplements?

There is no legal definition of a supplement. Dietary supplements (sports, dietary or herbal) are products which may contain natural or synthetic ingredients. Used alongside a normal diet to improve health or enhance sporting performance, they can be taken in various forms (pill, capsule, powder, drink). Quality independent scientific evidence of the benefits of supplements is limited; claims are often produced by the company itself. Be aware of these risks.

The nutritional supplement sector is a large, rapidly growing market, estimated to be worth US\$23 billion. Commercial marketing claims targeting athletes with supplements benefits to health and performance that sometimes have no scientific or clinical basis.

Do I need Supplements?

Elite athletes, in particular athletes on a World Class or a Talent Programme, want to optimise all areas of performance, including training, recovery, injury prevention, diet and mental skills. A high quality diet, together with performance-focused sound nutritional practices, plays a fundamental role in training, recovery and performance. At the elite level of performance, use of carefully selected, scientifically proven and quality-assured nutritional supplements for planned periods of time may contribute to maximising your performance potential.

Assess the need for supplementation by consulting an accredited sports dietician, registered nutritionist with expertise in sports nutrition, or a sports and exercise medicine doctor, before you take any supplement. If your diet is found to be deficient in a particular micronutrient, supplementation may be recommended.

What can I do to reduce the risks associated with supplements?

Athletes have a personal responsibility to evaluate all the risks associated with supplements before using them.

Optimise your diet, lifestyle and training before considering supplements.

Consult an independent qualified nutritionist for a full dietary assessment, covering training, performance and travel times.

If you have determined that supplement use is worth the risk, always minimize your risk by:

Risk Minimisation Steps:

Use a supplement only under qualified medical supervision.

Choose a supplement that contains only the actual substance you need.

Only choose supplements that are part of a rigorous, current testing certification* programme.

Make a direct enquiry to the manufacturer and get a written guarantee that the product is free of any substances on the current WADA Prohibited List (and any updates). Ask if the manufacturer is prepared to stand behind its product. If they are not – don't use that product.

Check if the manufacturer makes any products that do contain prohibited substances. If prohibited substances are present in a manufacturing plant, the risk of cross-contamination with the supplement is higher – don't use that product.

Conduct rigorous searches on the internet for any association with doping risks or offences. Retain proof showing the sensible and obvious precautions you took to address the various risk factors associated with its use before taking the supplement.

Keep records of all searches and enquiries you have undertaken to check the product. Keep records and packaging from supplements taken, with records of when and how taken.

Check 'high risk' lists: e.g. USADA Supplement 411 website www.supplement411.org/supplement411/high-risk-list or Cologne List www.koelnerliste.com

If you run out of the product, beware of purchasing from another country or a similar product without carrying out the same checks.

***Certification Programmes**

No certification programme can 100% guarantee that a supplement (or any other food or drink) does not contain banned substances: there is no guarantee against an inadvertent doping violation and the principle of 'Strict Personal Liability' always applies.

If you have determined that supplement use is worth the risk, minimize your risk by looking for a certified testing programme. Several are available:

1. HFL Sport Science, a leading independent provider of drugs surveillance, doping control and research in sport, operates a quality assurance and certification programme for supplements called "Informed Sport". The programme, which receives the support of UK Anti-Doping (UKAD), helps athletes to minimise risk by enabling them to make informed decisions. Informed Sport works with nutritional supplement manufacturers which have signed up to the scheme to batch-test products for banned substances on the current WADA Prohibited List. Products which have been batch-tested for banned substances bear the 'Informed-Sport' logo. Any batch-lines found to contain banned substances are withdrawn from the market by the manufacturers. A review of testing results from the Informed Sport programme in 2012 shows that contaminated supplements were identified in 2 out of 2,678 samples tested (0.07%) and those products were withdrawn.

Athletes can check supplement products against batch testing results and note the batch number and analysis certificates using the informed sport website: www.informed-sport.com. Athletes should check batch testing for each individual product and not assume that if one manufacturer's product is safe, all products are.

2. The NSF Certified for Sport™ program can help athletes identify products (mainly US) that have been tested for purity banned substances, and help minimize the risk of inadvertent doping (www.nsf-sport.com). The NSF Certified for Sport mark will appear on the label of a tested supplement. You can consult the full list of certified products at www.nsf-sport.com.

3. Cologne List® includes sport-related nutritional products such as sports drinks, muesli bars, bread mixes etc. can also be found on the list. http://www.koelnerliste.com/no_cache/en/product-database.html

Educate yourself about Supplement Risks: the following websites may be of interest:

<http://www.supplement411.org/supplement411/high-risk-list>

<http://www.ausport.gov.au/ais/nutrition/supplements/classification>

<http://www.antidoping.ch/en/medicine-substances-and-methods/dietary-supplements-guide>

<http://www.koelnerliste.com/en/cologne-list.html>

These precautions may help demonstrate that you were not at fault or not significantly at fault if a violation occurs as a result of supplement use. Although in most circumstances a violation will still be declared, proof that the utmost caution was observed may be taken into consideration when the sanction is imposed. More severe sanctions may be applied for careless supplement use. The risks associated with supplementation are clear – the responsibility for assuming these risks ultimately rests with you.

British Weightlifting strongly recommends that athletes **do not** use supplements because of the risk of a positive test. Elite athletes on British Weight Lifting World Class and Talent programmes should follow the advice and recommendations of programme nutritionists and/or its medical practitioners which meet their specific performance requirements.

KEY POINTS FOR ALL ATHLETES AND ATHLETE SUPPORT PERSONNEL

- **Remember there are no guarantees** – supplements come with associated risks: some ingredients may not appear on the label; banned substances may use a different name from that on the Prohibited List; product contamination of banned substances is possible.
- **Assess the need** – consult a reputable nutritionist or medical practitioner to help determine if you need a supplement to support your health or optimize performance. In the case of elite athletes: consult World Class or Talent programme appointed practitioners.
- **Evaluate the risk** – check supplement contents, use certification programmes e.g. Informed Sport, NSF, Cologne List; note batch test numbers and certificates. Check high risk lists e.g. AIS, Supplement 411.
- **Determine your position on supplement use** after researching established information sites.

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November 2014