

Safety Tip of the Month – May 2009
VSI Safety Committee

“Have you thought about which medicines may keep you out of the pool?”

USA Swimming (USA-S) adheres to the anti-doping rules of the United States Olympic Committee (USOC) and the Federation Internationale de Natation Amateur (FINA). The anti-doping rules consist of regulations, developed by the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA), which list those performance enhancing drugs that are prohibited during competition and /or practice.

The 2009 Prohibited List of Performance Enhancing Drugs, consistent with the World Anti-Doping Code, includes but is not limited to the following substances:

- Anabolic agents
 - androgenic steroids
 - precursors to androgenic steroids, that when administered increase the level of circulating steroids
 - clenbuterol
 - selective androgen receptor modulators
- Hormones and Related Substances
 - Erythropoiesis stimulating agents (drugs that increase red blood cell production)
 - Insulin's, and Insulin Like Growth Factors
 - Corticotrophins (substances that increases the body's production of endogenous steroids)
 - Chorionic gonadotropin and Luteinizing hormone in males
 - Growth Hormone
- Beta-2 Agonists
 - Inhaled Beta 2 agonists, such as albuterol, salmeterol, and terbutaline, may be used but REQUIRE an advanced Therapeutic Use Exemption request from the athlete.
- Diuretics (Lasix, bemezanide, hydrochlorothiazide)
- Drugs that increase uptake, transport, or delivery of oxygen in the blood (administration of perfluorochemicals, ephedrine, or modified hemoglobin products)
- Stimulants (amphetamine, ephedrine, methamphetamine, cocaine, fenfluramine)
- Narcotics (such as morphine, fentanyl, oxycodone)
- Cannabinoids (hashish, marijuana)
- Glucocorticosteroids

There are many reasons why each of the above drugs may be deleterious to the athlete's long term health. It is well known that anabolic steroids, while increasing lean muscle mass and sports performance, lead to increased aggression, liver damage, hyperlipidemia, higher incidence of infertility in men, lowering of the voice and cessation of breast development in women, and in both genders premature long bone growthplate closure in children..

Even if one of the drugs is prescribed for a specific medical condition, the use of this drug during swimming competition and / or practice is not permitted. Athletes may apply for a Therapeutic Use Exemption for inhaled Beta Agonists, but even in this case, if the presence of the beta agonist in the urine is above a specific threshold concentration, the athlete will be suspended from competition In USA-S events.

It is up to the athlete, parents, and coach to be aware of any medications that are so noted as “performance enhancing drugs,” and to stop taking such drugs. or seek a “Therapeutic Use Exemption, if such medications are required for medical reasons. Even if a drug is required for medical reasons, there is no guarantee that the Therapeutic Use Exemption will be granted by the World Anti-Doping Agency for such drug.

Why all the complexity with drug analysis and testing in our aquatic athletes? The reason is very simple....each swimmer deserves and should be afforded an equal chance of success in swimming competition. Performance enhancing drugs may provide an unfair advantage to those swimmers who take such drugs, and as such cannot be permitted in the USA-S swimming venue; both in competition and during practice throughout the year.

As noted in the USA-S Rules and Regulations, “All athletes should check the status of all medications they plan to take BEFORE taking them.” This includes both prescription AND over the counter medications. It is clearly the responsibility of the athlete to make sure that no prohibited substance enters her / his system.

Additional information on prohibited performance enhancing drugs in USA Swimming athletes may be found at the following sites:

www.fina.org

www.usoc.org

www.usantidoping.org

Happy and Safe Swimming, form the VSI Safety Committee!!