

SUBSTANCES OF ABUSE UNDER THE 2021 WORLD ANTI-DOPING CODE

GUIDANCE NOTE FOR ANTI-DOPING ORGANIZATIONS

Pursuant to Article 4.2.3 of the [2021 World Anti-Doping Code \(the Code\)](#), some substances on the [2021 List of Prohibited Substances and Prohibited Methods \(2021 Prohibited List\)](#) have been identified as Substances of Abuse “because they are frequently abused in society outside the context of sport”.

[WADA's Prohibited List Expert Advisory Group \(ListEG\)](#) has identified the following substances as Substances of Abuse in the 2021 Prohibited List.

- Cocaine (S.6a – Non-specified Stimulants);
- Methylenedioxymethamphetamine (MDMA / “ecstasy”) (S.6b – Specified Stimulants);
- Diamorphine (Heroin) (S.7 – Narcotics); and
- Tetrahydrocannabinol (THC) (S.8 – Cannabinoids).

As per Code Article 10.2.4.1, where the Anti-Doping Rule Violation involves a Substance of Abuse and “the Athlete can establish that any ingestion or Use occurred **Out-of-Competition** and was **unrelated to sport performance**, then the period of Ineligibility shall be three (3) months. In addition, the period of Ineligibility calculated may be reduced to one (1) month if the Athlete or other Person satisfactorily completes a Substance of Abuse treatment program approved by the Anti-Doping Organization with Results Management responsibility”.

It is important to note that the definition of **In-Competition** is as follows: “The period commencing at 11:59 p.m. on the day before a Competition in which the Athlete is scheduled to participate through the end of such Competition and the Sample collection process related to such Competition. Provided, however, WADA may approve, for a particular sport, an alternative definition if an International Federation provides a compelling justification that a different definition is necessary for its sport; upon such approval by WADA, the alternative definition shall be followed by all Major Event Organizations for that particular sport.”

For the application of this Code provision, the analytical concentrations reported by WADA-accredited Laboratories should be interpreted as follows:

- **For Cocaine:**

The following situations should be considered most likely to correspond to an In-Competition use of cocaine:

- Presence of cocaine parent compound at an estimated urinary concentration above (>) 10 ng/mL; or



- Presence of benzoylecgonine (main metabolite of cocaine) at a urinary concentration above (>) 1000 ng/mL combined with the presence of cocaine parent compound between (\geq) 1 ng/mL and (\leq) 10 ng/mL.

Notes:

1. *Cocaine parent compound can significantly degrade to benzoylecgonine in basic urine (pH= 8 or higher), and the presence of high urinary concentrations of benzoylecgonine in such basic urines should be considered by the Results Management Authority as a sign of possible In-Competition use of cocaine, in particular when taken in conjunction with previous or future cocaine results from the same athlete.*
2. *Consumption of Coca tea, as observed in some restricted parts of the world, shortly prior to a competition, could lead to an Adverse Analytical Finding for cocaine.*

- **For Tetrahydrocannabinol (THC):**

- Presence of carboxy-THC at a concentration above (>) the Decision Limit (DL)⁽¹⁾ of 180 ng/mL should be considered most likely to correspond to an In-Competition use of cannabis.

Note:

1. *For carboxy-THC, a Decision Limit is already established (pre-2021 Code), so no Adverse Analytical Finding shall be reported for concentrations below the Decision Limit.*

The above should be used as guidance only as it may not apply in each case. Each matter shall be reviewed based on the specific facts of the case to make a determination.

More information on Methylenedioxymethamphetamine (MDMA / “ecstasy”) and Diamorphine (Heroin) will be published in the coming months.

Should you have any questions, or wish to provide feedback, please contact WADA’s Science Department at: science@wada-ama.org.

⁽¹⁾ [See WADA Technical Document – TD2019DL v. 2.0 Document](#)