

# **EQUINE MEDICATIONS RULES**

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EQUINE MEDICATIONS RULES

1. PERMITTED MEDICATIONS

The USPA will impose no penalty for the administration of the following classes of medications to polo horses:

- 1. Antibiotics, antiprotozoals
- 2. Dewormers
- 3. Hormonal therapies in mares (e.g. Regumate®, altrenogest)
- 4. Anti-Ulcer medications (e.g. Gastrogard®/Ulcergard®, Cimetidine, Ranitidine)
- 5. Anti-arthritic medications (e.g. Adequan®, Legend®)
- 6. Navicular Syndrome management medications
  - Salicylic Acid (Aspirin)
  - Isoxuprine
  - Bisphosphonates (e.g. Tildren®, OsPhos®)\*

\* Bisphosphonates are not to be used in horses under 5 years of age

The USPA strongly opposes excessive dosages and/or introduction of non-therapeutic levels of the above Permitted Medications and/or vitamins and minerals for performance enhancing purposes. See Rule 3.3.4, below. Responsible Parties are urged to consult their veterinarians for proper dosage levels consistent with these Rules.

2. RESTRICTED USE MEDICATIONS

2.1 The medications listed in Table 1 are allowed by the USPA at the listed Allowable Blood Levels and therefore are not required to be listed on USPA Medication Report Form.

The Maximum Dosage and Latest Administration Hour Guidelines in Table 1 are for informational purposes only. The Maximum Allowable Blood Plasma Levels indicated in Table 1 are incorporated in this Rule 2.1 by reference and therefore any horse testing in excess of those levels will subject the Responsible Parties under these Rules to a Conduct Violation charge.

Caution is urged when using compounded medications with varying administration routes not specified in Table 1. Only the listed administration routes with non-compounded medications have been evaluated for the dose and time recommendations.

2.2A horse may not be administered more than one permitted Non-Steroidal Anti-Inflammatory Drug (NSAID) within 72 hours of competition. This rule does not apply to Aspirin.

TABLE 1: RESTRICTED MEDICATION ALLOWABLE BLOOD LEVELS and RESTRICTED MEDICATION DOSE AND TIME GUIDELINES					
Class of Medication	Generic Name (Trade Name)	Max Dosage	Latest Administration Hour	Administration Method	Max allowed blood plasma levels permitted
Nonsteroidal Anti-inflammatory (NSAID)	Diclofenac (Surpass®)	5 inch ribbon, ½ inch thick	>12 hours	Topical, 2 doses each 12 hours apart	<0.005 micrograms/ml
	Firocoxib (EquioXX®)	0.1 mg/kg (0.0455 mg/ lb) (45.5 mg/1000 lb)	>12 hours	Oral	<0.240 micrograms/ml
	Phenylbutazone (Butazolidin®)	2.0 mg/lb (2.0 g/1000 lb)	>12 hours	Oral, Intravenous	<15.0 micrograms/ml
		1.0 mg/lb (1.0 g/1000 lb)	>12 hours	Oral, 2 doses, 12 hrs apart	
	Flunixin Meglumine (Banamine®)	0.5 mg/lb (500 mg/1000 lb)	>12 hours	Oral, Intravenous	<1.0 micrograms/ml
	Ketoprofen (Ketofen®)	1.0 mg/lb (1.0 g/1000 lb)	>12 hours	Intravenous	<0.250 micrograms/ml
	Meclofenamic Acid (Arquel®)	0.5 mg/lb (500 mg/1000 lb)	>12 hours	Oral	<2.5 micrograms/ml
Muscle Relaxant	Naproxen (Naprosyn®)	4.0 mg/lb (4.0 g/1000 lb)	>12 hours	Oral, 2 doses each day, 12 hrs apart	<40.0 micrograms/ml
	Methocarbamol (Robaxin®)	5.0 mg/lb (5.0 g/1000 lb)	>12 hours	Oral, 2 doses, 12 hrs apart	<4.0 micrograms/ml
Corticosteroids	Dexamethasone (Azlum®)	1.0 mg/100 lb (10 mg/1000 lb)	>12 hours	Intra-Articular, Intramuscular, Oral	<0.003 micrograms/ml
Other Corticosteroids*	Prednisolone*	1.0 mg/ kg	>48 hours	Oral	1 monogram/ml
	Betamethasone*	9.0 mg of Betamethasone Sodium Phosphate and Betamethasone Acetate Injectable Suspension, USP	>5 days	Intra-Articular	20 picograms/ml
	Isoflupredone*	20 mg total dose subcutaneous, intramuscular or 20 milligrams total dose in one intra-articular space	>5 days	Intra-Articular, Intramuscular	200 picograms/ml
	Methylprednisolone*	50 mg total dose of methylprednisolone acetate suspension in one articular space	>5 days	Intra-Articular	100 picograms/ml
	Triamcinolone acetate*	9.0 mg total dose in one articular space	>5 days	Intra-Articular	200 picograms/ml

\*These corticosteroids require submission of a USPA Medication Report Form according to Rule 4.4

### 3. PROHIBITED MEDICATIONS AND SUBSTANCES

3.1 All medication classes not specifically permitted by these Rules are prohibited. Prohibited **medications** and substances include Anabolic Steroid (including but not limited to Boldenone, Nandrolone, Stanozolol and Testosterone), stimulant, depressant (stimulants and/or depressants are defined as substances which stimulate or depress the cardiovascular, respiratory or central nervous systems), tranquilizer, local anesthetic, psychotropic (mood and/or behavior altering) substance, or **medication** which might affect the performance of a horse, or any metabolite and/or analog of any such substance or **medication or substance**, except as expressly permitted by these Rules.

3.2. Prohibited **medications** and substances also include any substance (or metabolite and/ or analogue thereof) permitted by these Rules when introduced, applied or administered in excess of the maximum limit or other restrictions prescribed herein.

3.3 Notwithstanding any of the foregoing Rules, the following **medications** and substances are specifically prohibited when introduced or applied as described below:

1. Adenosine Triphosphate (“ATP”) in any application or dosage amount;
2. Selenium injections in any application or dosage amount;
3. Magnesium sulfate given intravenously in any dosage amount;
4. All vitamins and minerals, no matter how administered, when given in excessive dosages or quantities for non-therapeutic reasons.

### GUIDELINES FOR THE TIME PERIOD FOR PROHIBITED MEDICATIONS DISSIPATION

The following Guideline information is for horses competing in USPA Events. This information does not apply to any horse competing under any **medication** testing program using a laboratory other than the USPA Designated Laboratory (see Rule 5.2.7 be- low). This information is current at the time of writing; however, the USPA Designated Laboratory may refine existing **medication** tests to be more sensitive and develops new tests. Improved testing procedures may be implemented at any time without prior notice. The guidelines listed are anticipated times for complete elimination of substances from the horse according to the best available studies. The time periods indicated are intended to be only informative Guidelines for the dissipation from the horse’s system of Prohibited Medications, but may become obsolete as new and more sensitive procedures are implemented. Responsible Parties are therefore warned that reliance on these Guidelines will not serve as a defense to a violation of the USPA Equine Medications Rules in the event of a positive test. Although these Guidelines apply to many horses, they cannot account for normal variation in metabolism of **medications** by individual horses. Responsible Parties should consult **medication** manufacturers and knowledgeable veterinarians for more specific advice concerning the administration of any medication, its duration and dissipation. This Guideline

information is presented with the assumption that any and all medications are used for a therapeutic purpose in the diagnosis and treatment of illness or injury, and that any dose administered is a conservative and therapeutic dose consistent with the manufacturer’s recommendations.

\* These are Guidelines only and do not address a complete list of prohibited **medications** and substances.

TABLE 2: Guidelines for Approximate Time for Dissipation		
Long-acting Tranquilizers and Psychotropics	Fluphenazine and reserpine	90 days
Anabolic Steroids	Boldenone	82 days
	Nandrolone	35 days
	Stanozolol	47 days
	Testosterone	30 days
Short-acting Tranquilizers and Sedatives	Acepromazine, Romifidine, Detomidine, Xylazine	7 days
Local Anesthetics	Lidocaine and Mepivacaine	7 days
Nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs	Phenylbutazone and Flunixin	7 days
Antihistamines	Cyproheptadine and Pyrilamine	7 days
Respiratory medications	Albuterol, Ventipulmin	7 days

4. THERAPEUTIC MEDICATION USE

4.1 Certain conditions requiring immediate medical attention occurring within 24 hours prior to an Event, including minor injuries, colic episodes or any other medically valid non-lameness related emergency condition (1) must be treated by a veterinarian, licensed in the State within the United States or Canada wherein the Event occurs; and (2) requires a submission of a USPA Medication Report Form as referenced in rule 4.4 to explain the presence of medications that may later appear on a Medication Test Screen.

4.2 The submission of a USPA Medication Report Form is not intended to create a “free pass” for a positive test of samples taken from a horse. In assessing whether a violation of these Rules has occurred, the USPA will consider the entire factual and medical context surrounding the administration of the treatment reported in a USPA Medication Report Form, including but not limited to the reason for the treatment and the necessity of the type and amount of medication utilized.

4.3 Notwithstanding the foregoing Rule 4.1, the following **medications** in Table 3 may

be administered at the following dose and time limits, and if administered require that a USPA Medication Report Form be submitted.

TABLE 3				
Medication (Generic Name)	Medication (Trade Name)	Max Dosage	Time Limit	Administration Method
Dantrolene	Dantrium®	800 mg	> 3 hours	Oral
Furosemide	Salix®	<= 250 mg	> 3 hours	IV or IM

- 4.4 A USPA Medication Report Form must be filed under the following conditions:
- 1. **Must be signed by a veterinarian, licensed in the State within the United States or Canada wherein the Event occurs.**
  - 2. Any intra-articular, musculoskeletal, subcutaneous injection or oral administration containing corticosteroids (with the exception of Dexamethasone) that may be present in testing results should be reported within 48 hours of treatment.
  - 3. Emergency treatments within 24 hours of game time that contain any medications that may be present in testing results should be reported within 12 hours of treatment or as soon as possible before game time if less than 12 hours prior. (See Rules 4.1 and 4.2)
  - 4. Lasix and Dantrolene use must be reported before game time but need only be reported once for any given tournament(s). (See Rule 4.3)

CAUTION AGAINST THE USE OF HERBAL/NATURAL PRODUCTS

Responsible Parties are hereby warned that the administration of so-called “herbal” and “natural” products to a horse may result in a positive **medication** screen test indicating the presence of Prohibited **Medications** or Substances under these Rules. This testing result may in some cases be contrary to claims of safety or permitted use by those who manufacture and/or market such products. In this regard, Responsible Parties should be skeptical of any claims by manufacturers or others that such products are “legal” or permissible for use at competitions or Events recognized by the USPA. Responsible Parties under these Rules are further cautioned that the plant origin of any ingredient does not preclude its containing a pharmacologically potent and readily detectable prohibited substance, (e.g., cocaine, heroin and marijuana all are derived from plants). Specifically, this applies to cannabinoids such as CBD. Currently these products are known to effect mentation and behavior in horses and are thus prohibited. Further, Responsible Parties are also warned that although the use of some of these products may not have resulted in positive **medication** tests in the past, this does not preclude their triggering a positive **medication** screen test in the future. For these reasons, the USPA warns most strongly against the use of such products. The ingredient labeling for such preparations is often not complete or accurate. Especially suspect are preparations that are claimed to “calm” or “relax” a horse, while at the same time being said to contain no prohibited substances. Such products include, but are not limited to: valerian, kava kava, passionflower, skullcap, chamomile, vervain, lemon balm, leopard’s bane, night

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shade, capsaicin, comfrey, devil’s claw, hops, laurel, lavender, red poppy and rauwolfia.

RESPONSIBLE PARTIES UNDER THESE RULES, AND THEIR VETERINARIANS, ARE THEREFORE CAUTIONED AGAINST THE USE OF MEDICINAL PREPARATIONS, TONICS, PASTES, POWDERS, AND PRODUCTS OF ANY KIND, INCLUDING THOSE USED TOPICALLY, THE INGREDIENTS AND QUANTITATIVE ANALYSIS OF WHICH ARE NOT SPECIFICALLY KNOWN, AS THEY MAY CONTAIN A PROHIBITED SUBSTANCE. THIS IS ESPECIALLY TRUE OF THOSE CONTAINING PLANT INGREDIENTS.

REGARDING “APPROVED” OR “ENDORSED” PRODUCTS

The USPA does not endorse or sanction herbal, natural, or medicinal products of any kind.

THE VETERINARIAN’S RESPONSIBILITIES

When dealing with illness or injury in a horse appearing in an Event, the veterinarian should prescribe or administer whatever substance is indicated as medically necessary for therapeutic purposes. Whenever prescribing or administering a substance prohibited or restricted by these Rules, the veterinarian should advise the Responsible Parties under these Rules or their representative of the possible interaction of that treatment with these USPA Equine Medications Rules.

Furthermore, no veterinarian should be party to the administration of a medication to a horse or pony in excessive dosages and/or for non-therapeutic purposes or to affect the performance of the horse. The USPA considers such conduct unethical and likely to encourage further unethical conduct among Responsible Parties under these Rules. Therefore, such conduct is contrary to USPA Rules and undermines the fairness of competition at Events.

5. RESPONSIBLE PARTIES UNDER THESE RULES

5.1 Responsible Parties under these Rules **shall** include the Owner and Player of the horse, as well as all parties defined in Rule 5.2. Responsible Parties are accountable for the condition of the horse and compliance with these Rules. In the absence of substantial evidence to the contrary, Responsible Parties are also responsible and accountable under the disciplinary and penalty provisions of the USPA Rules and/or By-Laws. They are additionally responsible for guarding each horse at and sufficiently prior to an Event, so as to prevent the administration by anyone of, or the horse’s exposure to, any Restricted Use Medication or Prohibited **Medication** or Substance. Responsible Parties under these Rules are presumed to be aware of all the provisions of these Rules and all other rules and regulations of the USPA and the penalty provisions of those rules

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and regulations. A violation of these Rules shall be considered a Conduct Violation under applicable USPA Rules and/or By-Laws.

## 5.2 Definitions.

5.2.1 An “Owner” is defined as any adult (or adults) who has or shares the responsibility for the care, training, custody, control, condition or performance of the horse, financial or otherwise. This could be one person or several individuals. In the event a corporate entity is the Owner or the Owner is otherwise not responsible under these Rules, then the primary Sponsor of the team for whom the horse appears shall stand in place of the Owner as a person who may be charged with any violation of these Rules. In the event the Owner is a minor (under age 18 years of age at the time of alleged violation) who is also a member of the USPA, then the parent of the minor, if a member of the USPA, and the minor shall both be responsible under these Rules. The Sponsor of the team for which the minor’s horse appeared shall also be responsible along with the child and parent.

5.2.2 As used in these Rules, “Sponsor” is defined consistent with USPA Outdoor Rule 1.f. and Interpretation 1.f.

5.2.3 “Player” is defined as the person riding the horse in an Event and can be the same person as the Owner. The Player is responsible for a violation of these Rules **except in the case of Intercollegiate/Interscholastic Polo when using the Split String Format as defined in the I/I Information Packet.**

**5.2.4 “Horse Provider” is defined as the individual who has signed an Equine Lease Agreement with the USPA.**

5.2.5 “Substantial evidence” means affirmative evidence of such a clear and definite nature as to reasonably establish a fact. It is not the same burden of proof as that required in a court of law.

5.2.6 Leased or Borrowed Horses. The Owners of leased or borrowed horses are also responsible for any violations of these Rules by the party leasing or borrowing those horses.

5.2.7 For the purposes of these Rules, an “event” or “Event” is a USPA Event or a Club Event as those terms are defined in Section 1 of the USPA Tournament Conditions.

5.2.8 For the purposes of these Rules, “USPA Designated Laboratory” is the laboratory designated by the USPA Equine Welfare Committee, with notice to the USPA membership, to conduct testing under Rule 6.9 below.

## 6. TESTING PROCEDURE AND PROTOCOL



6.1 At any given Event, the USPA may designate one or two licensed veterinarian(s) (the “Sampling Veterinarian(s)”) to take samples from horses being played at that Event.

6.2 A USPA Representative shall arrive at least one hour prior to start of a game to meet with teams, the Sampling Veterinarian(s) and technician(s), to explain that testing will be taking place, identify the designated testing location, and answer any questions.

6.3 After the pre-game meeting, the USPA Representative will draw at random which players’ horse(s) will be selected from each period and which players will have more than one horse selected. At least one horse will be selected per period, with each player having a minimum of one horse tested per game. A minimum of 8 horses will be tested per game for a 6-period game and a minimum of 6 horses will be tested for a 4-period game.

6.4 During the game, the Sampling Veterinarian(s) and their technicians or assistants are to identify horses for testing by taking photographs and written descriptions. They may also identify them by scanning for a microchip.

6.5 If a fetlock band is used and breaks before testing the Sample Veterinarian(s) will refer to the photographs to identify the horse and apply a new fetlock band.

6.6 After the completion of the Event, the Sampling Veterinarian(s) shall inform the Owner or Player that the selected horses are to be brought to the designated testing location for a blood sample to be taken. Upon such notice by the Sampling Veterinarian(s), the Owner or Player must ensure that the horse does not leave field- side until the sample has been taken.

6.7 An Owner, Player or his or her designated representative must accompany the Sampling Veterinarian(s) and observe the sample being collected from the horse. The Owner, Player or his or her designated representative shall then acknowledge in writing on the USPA Field Testing Form that the given sample was taken from the horse identified on the form. Failure or refusal by an Owner, Player or his or her designated representative to comply with this Rule creates an irrefutable presumption that the sample was correctly taken from the Owner’s or Player’s horse.

6.8 Three separate tubes of blood shall be collected from each horse by the Sampling Veterinarian(s). These three samples will be designated as Sample A (two tubes) and Sample B (a single tube). Samples shall be securely labeled with the date, name of the Event, sex, approximate age of the horse, and a pre-printed barcode and corresponding number.

6.9 Samples shall be transferred as quickly as possible to the USPA Designated Laboratory for testing consistent with these Rules. Only Sample A shall be tested initially. Sample B shall be preserved for further testing as permitted under these Rules.

6.10 Weather Policy: It is in the discretion of the Sampling Veterinarian and USPA Representative to cancel testing if extreme weather (excessive rain, lightning, excessive heat, etc.) exists.

## 7. PRESUMED VIOLATION FOR POSITIVE TEST

7.1 A positive test for a Prohibited **Medication** or Substance presumes a violation of these Rules.

7.2 It shall not be a defense to a violation of these Rules nor to any Conduct Violation that the veterinarian that initially administered the Prohibited **Medication** or Substance failed to render proper advice or provided improper advice about compliance with these Rules.

7.3 A presumed violation may be rebutted by substantial evidence that the horse sampled was not owned by, ridden, or played by the Owner or Player charged with the violation or by substantial evidence that the test results are faulty, or otherwise the result of error.

7.4 The Owner, Player or other Responsible Party under these Rules charged with a violation of these Rules may request that Sample B be tested by the USPA Designated Laboratory or another qualified laboratory to confirm the results of the testing of Sample A. **This request must be made in writing within ten days of receipt of the initial Notice.**

7.5 A Conduct Violation arising from a violation of these Rules shall proceed under the Disciplinary provisions of the Association's Equine Medications Rules Violation Procedures, Part IV of the Association's Disciplinary Procedures Policy, which apply to violations of these Rules.

7.6 Responsible Parties under these Rules are cautioned that they are ultimately responsible for every substance that enters into their horse's system.

## 8. USE OF GUIDELINES AND COMMENTS

The USPA has provided herein certain GUIDELINES and COMMENTS with these Rules. The GUIDELINES and COMMENTS are provided to assist the Owner, Player and other Responsible Parties as well as the veterinarian with the interpretation and application of these Rules. However, the GUIDELINES and COMMENTS are neither intended to be, nor should be construed as, Rules by themselves, nor as defenses to any finding of a violation of these Rules.

For further information regarding these Rules, please contact the USPA by phone: 800-232-8772, or by email: [equinewelfare@uspolo.org](mailto:equinewelfare@uspolo.org).

