



Players' Health and Anti-Doping Guidelines

WORLD BRIDGE FEDERATION · MEDICAL & PREVENTION COMMITTEE

Objective

To provide players with a synopsis of handy and useful information to make them aware of the application of the rules and the procedures established by WADA for bridge.

Introduction

Since the WBF has signed the International Code of WADA, all players participating in International Bridge Competitions are obliged to abide by its rules and procedures. Failure to comply with these rules - if evidenced by the anti-doping test - involves sanctions of different types, depending on the severity of the transgression. To avoid these penalties it is essential that players are **fully aware** of the List of Prohibited Substances and the rules governing the Therapeutic Use Exemptions (TUEs).

Prohibited Substances

The WADA Prohibited List details all medications and substances that are banned – some are designated as prohibited at all times, others are prohibited in competition only (as defined by each sport but often within 24 hours of the competition); a third category may have additional substances prohibited within a specified sport, but at the present time there are none specified within bridge.

WADA updates this Prohibited Substances and Methods List periodically, and at least annually. The updated list normally applies from 1 January each year and is available a few months before on the WADA website.

Those substances prohibited only in-competition would include but not be limited to: stimulants, marijuana, narcotics and glucocorticosteroids.

Also banned at all times: methods such as blood transfusion or manipulation, or intravenous injections in some situations.

Players should note that one of the most commonly taken medications, **diuretics, are banned at all times** and anyone taking these should seek a TUE.

What is the difference between substances prohibited at all times and those prohibited in-competition?

To be banned at all times means to be prohibited all year long, including in training and in-competition as well. Examples: anabolic steroids, which when used in training may have long-term performance enhancing training effects, or masking agents, which can be used to hide evidence of doping.

By contrast, out-of-competition use of a substance that is prohibited only in-competition is not considered an Anti-Doping rule violation unless evidence of that substance is still in your system at the time of an in-competition test.

To be clear, many substances can stay in your system for a long time. If you return a positive result for a substance you took out-of-competition (that was not prohibited at the time you took it) and test positive for it at an in-competition doping control (where it is prohibited), you will be charged with an Anti-Doping rule violation.

Whether or not substances are expected to affect performance in bridge is irrelevant. If they are on the WADA prohibited list then they may not be used without a TUE (Therapeutic Use Exemption).

Tips

The WADA List of prohibited substances and methods is revised every year and published on the website of WADA www.wada-ama.org/en/, together with many other explanatory and detailed documents.

The actual document can be found here: <https://www.wada-ama.org/en/prohibited-list>

However - given the complexity of the list - you should follow some precautions:

In many countries, commercial pharmaceutical preparations for sale report a mark highlighting that “contains substance considered doping.” If you find this mark on a drug prescribed to you for medical reasons, you must consult your doctor and ask either to replace the drug with another one that does not contain substances on the WADA prohibited list or apply for a Therapeutic Use Exemption (TUE), ensuring that your doctor gives a comprehensive diagnosis and reasons for the need to prescribe a prohibited medication. Check lists are available on the WADA site to ensure all documentation can be accurately included.

Pay attention to the use of supplements (which are not subject to medical prescription) purchased in pharmacies or through the Internet, and closely monitor its composition.

Generally, supplements contain associations of multiple substances that are not included in the code-list. But sometimes traces of stimulants are found in these “over the counter” medications, due to undocumented preparation process or contaminations during the preparation process. Some of those “hidden compounds” or “contaminants” can be prohibited substances! Be aware that they can lead to a doping violation and thence to a disqualification process.

The same care must be applied to the highlighting of possible prohibited substances present at times in association with drugs in common use, such as in some pills and nasal sprays for colds and allergies.

Finally, remember to check accurately the substances you take shortly before the competitions for many different acute conditions: allergies, viral diseases, etc...

Therapeutic Use Exemptions (TUEs)

Details of how to apply for a TUE, and the required forms can be found on the WBF Website at <https://www.worldbridge.org/regulations/anti-doping/tue-forms/>

Tips

Additional information can be found on the WADA website: <https://www.wada-ama.org/en/what-we-do/science-medicine/therapeutic-use-exemptions> where checklists can be found for general use but also for specific diseases if TUEs are required.

There are also guidelines for your doctor for specific conditions (e.g ADHD <https://www.wada-ama.org/en/resources/therapeutic-use-exemption/tue-physician-guidelines-adhd>). You can take these to your doctor to get the right information.

Players should check whether it is possible to change their prescription to medications not containing the prohibited substance. If the drugs are not replaceable, you must complete the TUE application forms in English, with all the information and medical claim requests, and send them to the Chairman of the TUE Committee, Dr Jaap Stomphorst (antidoping@worldbridge.org), 30 days before the start of the competition.

The Committee will examine them to ensure that you have the requisite properly completed documents. Provided these are acceptable under WADA's regulations a TUE will then be issued, enabling you to participate in the event without problems.

We also need a separate document from your doctor with:

1. Evidence confirming the diagnosis: The medical evidence should include a comprehensive medical history and results of relevant examinations, laboratory investigations and imaging studies
2. Reasons for not prescribing alternative (non prohibited) therapies

In cases where a single player or a National Federation (NBO) has any doubts or queries in relation to the WADA Code, can - always on time - send them to the Secretary of the Commission who will forward them to the relevant members of the Commission requesting clarification.

In cases where a single player who has had his request for a TUE declined by the Commission and feels that this has caused damage, he or she may appeal to WADA for re-evaluation of his request.

Remember to apply for your TUE (if you need one) in good time – it must be applied for at least 30 days before the start of any International event in which you wish to participate.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Medical & Prevention WBF Committee