Supplements: Pre-Show Considerations

Drs. Foster & Smith Educational Staff

SUPPLEMENT withdrawal TIMES for competing horses

In horses, many drugs and supplements must be used with caution because of withdrawal times. For competitive horses, a withdrawal time is the time you need to wait between giving a drug/supplement and allowing your horse to compete.

Withdrawal times for competitions

Race horses and horses involved in all types of competitions, including dressage, jumping, barrel racing, etc, may have their blood and/or urine tested for various drugs and supplements prior to or after the competitive event.

For some drugs/supplements, the test results must reveal absolutely no evidence of the substance being present when the horse is tested. For others there is a minimum level that will be tolerated.

Supplements that may have withdrawal times include some natural or herbal products such as:

valerian, kava kava, passionflower, skullcap, chamomile, capsaicin, devil's claw, hops, and lavender.

Each drug or supplement has a different withdrawal time based on the acceptable level that may be present and the ability of the horse's body to remove it from their system. For many drugs/supplements, the average time necessary to reach the minimum level or totally clear the product from the horse has been determined. For some drugs/supplements this may be weeks after ingestion. Factors such as the age, breed, and health status of the horse may alter how long it takes for the proper levels to be reached.

There are a number of different rules that determine what level is acceptable. These rules are determined by:

- **State and federal regulations**
- **Regulations by various national horse organizations**
- **Regulations specific to an event**

Horse owners should contact their veterinarian and race/show officials before using any drug or supplement on their horse.

Supplements that may have specific withdrawal times

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Joint Supplements

Calming Supplements

Vitamin & Mineral Supplements

Skin, Coat & Hoof Supplements

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