

TRAMADOL


Important change coming on 1 January 2024
Summary for Medical Professionals

What is changing?

From 1 January 2024, **tramadol** will be added to the Prohibited List.
It will only be prohibited during the in-competition period.

Why is this important?

 Before 1 January 2024, **tramadol** has been on the WADA monitoring program but not prohibited. Monitoring data shows that **tramadol** has been used in certain sports including cycling, rugby and football.

 **Tramadol** is used globally as a painkiller and as it has similar properties to other opiates, abuse can be a problem. Due to the risk of dose dependent, physical dependence and addiction, including overdose, it is a controlled substance in many countries. To reduce these risks, **tramadol** is often given in formulations with other medications such as paracetamol or acetaminophen.

As a medical professional, you need to be aware that **tramadol** will be prohibited in-competition as of 1 January 2024 and consider this when treating athletes. Athletes may not use the medication in-competition unless they have been granted a Therapeutic Use Exemption (TUE). Note that **tramadol** given shortly prior to the in-competition period may still result in a (in-competition) positive test.

What is the in-competition period?

The in-competition period usually begins at 11:59 pm the day before the competition starts.



Athletes should check with their International Federation (IF) to see if the in-competition period is different for their sport.

Washout period

When treating athletes, medical professionals must be aware of the washout periods for **tramadol** to reduce the risk of an athlete testing positive. The washout period refers to the time from the last administered dose to the time of the start of the in-competition period (i.e. beginning at 11:59 p.m. on the day before a Competition in which the Athlete is scheduled to participate, unless a different period was approved by WADA for a given sport).



Tramadol usage and TUEs

If the athlete you are treating needs to take **tramadol** during the in-competition period to treat a diagnosed medical condition, the athlete must apply for a Therapeutic Use Exemption (TUE). Physicians and athletes should contact their National Anti-Doping Organization (NADO), IF or the Major Event Organization for more information on how and when to apply.

If the medication was used out-of-competition during the washout period, the athlete could still test positive during the competition. In this case, the athlete can apply for a retroactive TUE.








Remember, any medical treatment you are providing to athletes needs to respect the anti-doping rules at all times, including when to apply for a Therapeutic Use Exemption (TUE). Please see the [International Standard for TUEs](#), [ISTUE Guidelines](#) or [TUE Physician Guidelines on Pain Management](#) for more details if required.



Important: TUEs must meet the criteria set out in the International Standard for TUEs in order to be granted. Athletes and their medical professionals must consider carefully whether a TUE is likely to be approved and ensure they have the necessary medical documentation to support their TUE application. If the TUE is not approved the athlete may face an Anti-Doping Rule Violation.

Medical professionals need to ensure that medical records/files for the athlete they are treating are complete with all the evidence and information necessary to demonstrate the medical condition and need for the use of **tramadol** to support a TUE application. For a TUE to be granted, retroactively or prospectively, the criteria for a TUE needs to be met.

What do Medical Professionals need to do?

-  **Act** in line with the Anti-Doping Rules by keeping your anti-doping knowledge current and up-to-date and asking when you are unsure so athletes are not put at risk
-  **Review** the Prohibited List before prescribing or administering any substance
-  **Check** the information about the washout periods for **tramadol** to understand the risks of a positive test
-  **Prepare** a complete medical file, with sufficient diagnostic evidence in case a TUE is needed
-  **Speak** with your athletes to ensure they are aware of and understand the change in status of **tramadol**
-  **Check** the competition and the IF rules to understand when the in-competition period starts and check what the TUE application process is
-  **Learn** more about the Prohibited List and TUEs on [ADEL](#)

Remember!

From 1 January 2024, **tramadol** will be banned in-competition.

