

NCAA Drug Policies: Protecting Your Health and Athletic Career

NCAA student-athletes must be vigilant about what they put in their bodies, as violations can lead to serious consequences. Understanding the regulations on banned substances and supplements is essential to stay in the game.

MEDICAL EXCEPTIONS

The NCAA recognizes that some banned substances are used for legitimate medical purposes. Accordingly, the NCAA allows exceptions to be made for those student-athletes with a documented medical history demonstrating the need for treatment with certain banned medications. Medical exceptions may be granted for substances in the following banned drug classes: anabolic agents, stimulants, beta blockers, diuretics and masking agents, hormone and metabolic modulators, beta-2 agonists, peptide hormones, growth factors or related substances and mimetics and narcotics.

- **Preapproval is required for the use of anabolic agents; peptide hormones, growth factors, related substances and mimetics; and hormone and metabolic modulators.** The school must submit required documents to the NCAA before the student-athlete competes while using medications containing these substances. A reporting form is available at ncaa.org/drugtesting.
- For banned substance classes for which a medical exception review is permitted (stimulants, beta blockers, beta-2 agonists, diuretics, narcotics), preapproval is not required, but the school should maintain documents from the prescribing physician. When a medical exception review is requested for substances in these classes the reporting form (available at ncaa.org/drugtesting) must be completed.
- In the event that a student-athlete tests positive by the NCAA, the school shall be notified of the positive drug test, and at that time, the director of athletics or their designee may request an exception by submitting required documents to the NCAA-designated drug-testing agency, Drug Free Sport International.
- Requests for exceptions will be reviewed by members of the Committee on Competitive Safeguards and Medical Aspects of Sports and reported back to the school.





APPEALS

The NCAA drug-testing program allows a school to appeal a positive drug test on behalf of a student-athlete who has tested positive for an NCAA banned substance or who has violated the NCAA drug-testing protocol.

- The request for an appeal shall be submitted to the NCAA-designated drug-testing agency, Drug Free Sport International (DFSI). Schools must submit to DFSI the required appeal documentation ([see checklist](#)) to appeal.
- All appeals will start with a written review by at least three members from the NCAA Committee on Competitive Safeguards and Medical Aspects of Sports Drug-Test Appeal Subcommittee.
- Once a decision is rendered, NCAA staff will notify the director of athletics or their designee of the final outcome.
- In order to render a final decision from review of written materials, the Drug-Test Appeal Subcommittee's vote must be unanimous.
- If the Drug-Test Appeal Subcommittee's vote for a final decision is not unanimous or if the Drug-Test Appeal Subcommittee requests to elevate the review to an oral

hearing, DFSI staff will communicate with the appropriate school representative and initiate next steps required to schedule an oral hearing teleconference.

- Should the members of the Drug-Test Appeal Subcommittee elevate the review to an oral hearing, it will be conducted by teleconference arranged by DFSI for the NCAA.
- The director of athletics or their designee and the student-athlete must be on the appeal call.
- If the appeal is granted, no further action regarding the student athlete's eligibility need be taken. However, if the appeal is not granted, the student-athlete is required to comply with all applicable provisions of NCAA Bylaw 18, including testing negative for all banned drug classes on an NCAA-administered drug test before returning to competition.



*For more information,
visit ncaa.org/drugtesting.*

2024-25 NCAA BANNED DRUG CLASSES

The NCAA bans the following classes of drugs:

1. Stimulants.
2. Anabolic agents.
3. Beta blockers (banned for rifle only).
4. Diuretics and other masking agents.
5. Narcotics.
6. Peptide hormones, growth factors, related substances and mimetics.
7. Hormone and metabolic modulators.
8. Beta-2 agonists.

NOTE: Any substance that is chemically related to these classes is also banned. Examples in each banned substance class can be found at ncaa.org/drugtesting.

Substances and Methods Subject to Restrictions:

1. Blood and gene doping.
2. Local anesthetics (under some conditions).
3. Manipulation of urine samples.
4. Tampering of urine samples.
5. Beta-2 agonists permitted only by prescription and inhalation.

There is no complete list of banned substances. Any substance that is chemically related to the class, even if it is not listed as an example, is also banned.

SUPPLEMENTS

Before consuming any nutritional/dietary supplement product, first review the product with your athletics department staff!

- There are no NCAA-approved nutritional/dietary supplements.
- Many nutritional/dietary supplements are contaminated with banned substances not listed on the label.
- Nutritional/dietary supplements, including vitamins and minerals, are not well-regulated and may cause a positive drug test.
- Student-athletes have tested positive and lost their eligibility using nutritional/dietary supplements.
- Complete elimination of risk is impossible, even with third-party tested and low-level risk products.
- All nutritional/dietary supplements are taken at the student-athlete's own risk.

It is your responsibility to check with the appropriate athletics staff before using any substance.

Check a supplement product label at:



816-474-7321

axis.drugfreesport.com

Password: ncaa1, ncaa2 or ncaa3

Student-athletes are responsible for everything they ingest.



COMMONLY ABUSED SUBSTANCES AND THEIR IMPACT ON ATHLETIC PERFORMANCE AND ELIGIBILITY

ALCOHOL: Alcohol is a nervous system depressant. At high dosages, effects include mood swings, impaired judgment and inability to control motor functions. Alcohol can impair an athlete's performance through dehydration, depleting vital nutrients and interfering with restful sleep and recovery.

TOBACCO: Tobacco contains nicotine, a stimulant, and a multitude of damaging chemicals. Smoking tobacco damages lung tissue and reduces lung capacity. Spit tobacco use contributes to soft-tissue inflammation in the mouth and increases the risk of oral cancer. Tobacco use in all forms is prohibited during practice and competition by student-athletes and game personnel (Divisions II and III only), and may result in ejection from the game.

CANNABINOIDS: Cannabinoids include cannabis and cannabidiol (CBD). Cannabis use is linked to anxiety, panic reactions, respiratory damage, short-term memory impairment and a decreased focus on goals and personal achievement. Use of contemporary cannabinoids may pose additional health risks associated with problematic use.

BANNED

COCAINE: Cocaine is a stimulant that can contribute to agitation, elevated heart rate and increased blood pressure; toxic levels can result in respiratory failure and heart attack. Cocaine is an illegal substance and is *banned* by the NCAA.

BANNED

ANABOLIC STEROIDS: Anabolic steroids are synthetic versions of the male hormone testosterone. Anabolic steroid use changes the body's hormonal balance, exaggerating male sex characteristics, and can contribute to increased acne, mood swings, secondary sex characteristic changes and violent behavior. Long-term heavy use has been implicated in organ damage. All anabolic steroids are *banned* by the NCAA.

BANNED

NARCOTICS: Narcotics (pain killers) block pain and cause sleepiness, and at higher doses affect breathing, heart rate and blood pressure. Narcotics are controlled substances *banned* by the NCAA and should be obtained only from qualified medical personnel through a prescription.

BANNED

STIMULANTS: This group of drugs includes a wide variety of chemicals, ranging from caffeine and ephedrine to Ritalin and Adderall (amphetamine). Stimulant misuse can cause anxiety, panic, paranoia and delusions. Stimulant use during exercise can contribute to increased body temperature and dehydration. Stimulants are *banned* by the NCAA – see [Medical Exceptions](#) for prescribed drugs.



*Need help for substance abuse?
Visit [samhsa.gov/find-help/treatment](https://www.samhsa.gov/find-help/treatment).*

