



## Advice on Minimizing the Risk of Medication Problems in International Racehorses

1. When you travel to Hong Kong to participate in a Hong Kong Jockey Club (the Club) International Race you must be aware of the following:
  - 1.1. Any horse shall be free of any prohibited substance on the day on which it has been declared to race (i.e. race day), until such time as the Stewards release such horse after it has raced.
  - 1.2. Prohibited substances are, for the purposes of the Club's Rules of Racing, defined by Rule 136 which is provided in the Club's Horseman's Handbook.
  - 1.3. It is the trainer's responsibility to present horses trained by him free of prohibited substances on race day. Therefore you need to ensure that you are familiar with the Club's policies and procedures for the control of prohibited substances.
  - 1.4. At least seven days prior to travelling to Hong Kong, trainers are required to submit a medication declaration form to the Club that lists all medications administered to the racehorse within a specified period prior to the expected date of departure to Hong Kong irrespective of whether or not the medications are considered to be, or to contain, prohibited substances under the Rules of Racing of any other racing authority. The medication declarations must be updated at the time of the pre-travel veterinary inspection and again on arrival in Hong Kong.
  - 1.5. These medication declarations are strictly confidential and their purpose is to identify legitimate treatments that may have the potential to cause a positive test to prohibited substances on race day so that the Club may provide advice on elective urine testing and the suitability of the horse to travel to Hong Kong.
  - 1.6. Upon arrival at the isolation stables in Hong Kong, blood and urine samples for analysis for prohibited substances will be collected from all horses.
  - 1.7. Any post-arrival sample found to be positive to a prohibited substance(s) that is not consistent with the medication information provided on the Club's Medication Declaration Forms, may be withdrawn at the absolute discretion of the Stewards any time prior to racing.
  - 1.8. If the horse is withdrawn under these circumstances, the travel subsidy and declaration fee may be forfeited at the discretion of the Stewards of the Club.
2. To assist trainers in minimizing the risk of encountering problems that may be caused by the administration of medications or supplements prior to travelling to race in Hong Kong, you are strongly advised to **read the following advice carefully with your veterinary surgeon** and plan your medication program accordingly. The following advice is provided to assist Trainers and **it does not remove or transfer from the trainer his responsibility** to present any horse trained by him free of prohibited substances on the day on which it is to race.

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### **2.1. Long Acting, Depot Medications and Hormones**

Most medication problems that occur during International racing are caused by the prior administration of long acting / depot type medication such as anabolic steroids (especially oil based preparations) and long acting corticosteroids (especially methyl prednisolone acetate).

The Club's Racing Laboratory tests rigorously for anabolic steroids, long acting corticosteroids and hormones and horses treated with these types of products may return positive samples for many months after administration.

If you have administered anabolic steroids, long acting corticosteroids or any hormones to your horse within the last twelve months, it would be wise to consider submitting an elective urine sample to the Club's Racing Laboratory to ensure that the substance has cleared from the horse's system prior to departing for Hong Kong.

### **2.2. The Classification of Medications as Prohibited Substances**

You cannot assume that medications you are permitted to use for racing in your home country will be permitted in Hong Kong. For example, horses must be free of substances such as mucolytics, anti-ulcer medication, hormones or synthetic hormones on race day in Hong Kong. Examples of medications that may be permitted to be present in racehorses on raceday in other countries but not in Hong Kong include, but are not limited to, Demborexine, Bromhexine, Ranitidine, Cimetidine, Omeprazole, Hydroxyprogesterone, Altrenogest, Phenylbutazone, Flunixin meglumine and Furosemide.

### **2.3. Supplements, Herbal Products, "All Natural" Medications, Homeopathic Medications etc.**

You cannot assume that supplements, herbal products, homeopathic products, liniments and other patent medicines that you may use in your home country can be used without restriction in Hong Kong.

This especially applies to products that claim to be "all-natural" and to contain no prohibited substance but also claim to have similar effects to drugs. These products may contain unlabelled active ingredients or contaminants that will result in positive drug tests. It is wise to assume that any product that claims to have a pharmacological effect on the racehorse may be classified as a prohibited substance under the Club's Rules of Racing.

Be prepared to consult with the Club Veterinary Surgeons about the supplements administered to your horse and if necessary, be prepared to use substitute supplements supplied by the Club while in Hong Kong.

### **2.4. Recommended Withdrawal Periods (RWP) for Medication prior to Racing**

You cannot assume that the withdrawal times you apply to medications in your home country will be applicable to Hong Kong racing. Be prepared to seek the advice of Club Veterinary Surgeons on the RWP used in Hong Kong for commonly used equine medications.

Also, you need to understand that, while the RWP provided by the Club have been reliable for the particular products, routes of administration and dosages used by the Club's Department of Veterinary Clinical Services (DVCS) under Hong Kong conditions and are provided to assist you in good faith, any RWP provided by the Club's DVCS can only be considered as a guide to the veterinary surgeon treating the horse who must consider the individual circumstances of the treatment regime when recommending a RWP prior to racing for an individual treatment of an individual horse.

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The dose, route of administration, duration of treatment, effect of concurrent medications, stable or equipment contamination with medications, the individual characteristics of the horse and many other factors can significantly affect the time a medication takes to clear a horse's system. Also Club Veterinary Surgeons can only provide advice on medications that are routinely used in Hong Kong and then, only for the particular product, route of administration and dose that is commonly used.

Because of the many variables associated with the treatment of an individual horse, the provision of advice on the Club's RWP for a particular medication must in no way be interpreted as an absolute warranty that an individual horse, treated in an individual manner with a particular medication formulation, will be free of that prohibited substance on race day after expiry of the RWP.

### **2.5. Advance Planning of the Medication Program**

You will need to plan the medication of racehorses travelling to Hong Kong in advance with your veterinary advisors and seek the advice of the Club's Veterinary Surgeons whenever any doubts arise about the suitability of medications and supplements.

Keeping the medication and supplementation program as simple as possible by using common equine medications, avoiding long acting / depot / hormone formulations and avoiding herbal and patent medicines is a wise precaution.

If you think that your horse may require pre-travel medication, e.g. tranquillization, please contact the Club's DVCS to obtain advice on the selection of appropriate medication.

### **2.6. Elective Urine Sampling**

If you have any doubts whatsoever about the medication status of your horse prior to travelling, the Club provides an elective urine sampling service that can provide a result within three days of receipt of the sample at the Club's Racing Laboratory.

The Club cannot provide "blanket coverage" screening for all prohibited substances during elective screening but will test for a specific, legitimate medication that has been administered to your horse.

Elective urine samples must arrive at the Club's Racing Laboratory at least four days prior to the intended date of departure of the horse to Hong Kong.

Please note that you cannot rely on the testing of samples performed by any Laboratory other than the Club's Racing Laboratory for racing in Hong Kong.

Also please note that some prohibited substances may be detected in blood samples but not in urine samples. The Club is unable to provide an elective blood sampling service and if you have any concerns, you should contact your veterinary surgeon for advice.

## **3. Completing the Medication Declaration Forms (MDF1, MDF2 and MDF3)**

- 3.1. The Club requires the submission of Medication Declaration Forms that advise the Club of medication administered to international racehorses prior to their departure to Hong Kong to compete in Hong Kong International Races (HKIR).

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- 3.2. The primary purpose of the declaration forms is to identify treatments that have been administered may result in a racehorse returning a positive test to prohibited substances on the day of racing.
- 3.3. The declarations are confidential and intended only to avoid travelling a horse that has no realistic chance of clearing a medication in time to compete in the HKIR and also to provide the opportunity for Club Veterinary Surgeons to:
  - 3.3.1 Advise on the advisability of submitting an elective urine sample for testing for a medication prior to departure and,
  - 3.3.2 Provide advice on the recommended withdrawal periods used by Club Veterinary Surgeons when treating racehorses.
- 3.4. **THREE separate Forms must be submitted:**

### **3.4.1 First Medication Declaration Form (MDF1)**

#### **Time of Submission:**

At least 7 days prior to departure to Hong Kong (this is to provide enough time to submit an elective urine sample for testing by the Club Racing Laboratory).

#### **Section A**

##### **What needs to be declared?**

All long acting medication, e.g. ‘Depomedrol’ (Methyl Prednisolone Acetate) and other depot corticosteroids, anabolic steroids, implants, etc. that have been administered to the horse over the past six months. If in doubt as to what is a long acting medication, consult the Club Veterinary Surgeon or declare the medication as required for a long acting medication.

##### **Why?**

To identify treatment that may result in positive detection of a prohibited substance on raceday and to provide the opportunity for Club Veterinary Surgeons to offer advice on elective urine sampling.

#### **Section B**

##### **What needs to be declared?**

Any medication, or supplement about which you are unsure of its status as a prohibited substance or not, administered within 30 days of departure to Hong Kong.

##### **Why?**

In addition to identifying treatments that may be long-acting and cause problems on raceday, the declaration also enables Club Veterinary Surgeons to identify treatments that may require the provision of recommended withdrawal period advice for the treatment to avoid raceday problems.

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### **3.4.2 Second Medication Declaration Form (MDF2)**

#### **Time to be submitted:**

The form should be submitted at the time of pre-race veterinary inspection.

#### **What needs to be declared?**

Any medications administered since the submission of the first MDF1.

#### **Why?**

Again, to identify treatments that may cause the detection of a prohibited substance on raceday and to provide the opportunity for the Club Veterinary Surgeons to offer advice on the recommended withdrawal period for the medication.

### **3.4.3 Post-Arrival and Third Medication Declaration Form (MDF3)**

#### **Time to be submitted:**

The form should be submitted to a Club Veterinary Surgeon or the Quarantine Manager on arrival in Hong Kong.

#### **What needs to be declared & Why?**

Any medication administered since the submission of the second (MDF2) form for the same reasons as described for the MDF2.

This declaration should include any medication administered prior to or during the flight to Hong Kong but does not need to include medication administered by Club Veterinary Surgeons.

The trainers authorized delegate (travelling groom) may complete and sign this form on behalf of the trainer.

If you require any further advice or assistance in completing the forms, please contact:

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