

Parents' Webinar FAQ

On January 29, 2023, the CCES held a series of webinars for the parents of athletes going to the Canada Games. There were many excellent questions asked, which we recorded and have answered below. To those who participated and asked questions, thank you so much for your interest in and contributions to clean sport!

SAMPLE COLLECTION

If an athlete is selected for sample collection, is it compulsory to comply with testing?

Yes, if an athlete is selected for sample collection at the Canada Games, they have the responsibility to comply with the process. Athletes can be selected for urine collection, blood collection or both.

In relation to sample collection, what age is considered a “minor” at these games?

In Prince Edward Island, a minor is anyone under the age of 18. During sample collection, it is **mandatory** for a minor to have a representative.

What is the role of the representative and who can it be?

The role of the representative is to accompany the athlete through the sample collection process. They can support the athlete through the process and be with them at the doping control station.

The representative can be a caregiver (if available), coach, trainer, other support staff, or a teammate if they are over 18 years of age.

An athlete's parents won't be attending the Games. How can they prepare their minor (under 18 years old) athlete for choosing a representative?

Prior to the Games, have a conversation with your child about who their representative could be if they are chosen for sample collection!

At the Games, choosing an athlete representative will be up to the team administrators and the athlete who is selected for sample collection.

Why does someone witness the athlete provide the sample, especially if the athlete is a minor? Who will this person be?

To ensure the integrity of the doping control process, sample collection personnel (SCP) must witness the sample coming from the athlete's body.

SCP can be a doping control officer (DCO) or chaperone. A SCP of the same gender as the athlete will witness the athlete provide the sample.

If the athlete is a minor, the representative will watch the SCP while they watch the athlete provide the sample in the washroom area.

Sample collection personnel witness athletes provide samples. Do DCOs complete background checks and vulnerable sector checks?

All DCOs complete a criminal record check that is renewed every two years and they complete mandatory Safe Sport training.

All chaperones have also completed criminal record checks.

When can an athlete be tested as a participant at the Canada Games (e.g., just on competition days, any time during of Games). Can an athlete be tested more than once?

Canada Games athletes are subject to testing throughout the Games period, both in and out of competition. Athletes can be selected for testing after an event, practice, at a training facility or in the athletes' village.

Athlete selection is based on many factors, such as finishing placement, random selection, and inclusion in athlete testing pools. With this in mind, it's possible for athletes to be tested multiple times.

How long does sample collection take? Why do you suggest athletes bring change of clothes and snacks?

The duration of the sample collection process depends on several factors, such as:

- How long it takes for the athlete to provide the required sample amount (90 mL for urine collection).
- How many athletes are at the doping control station and the availability of sample collection personnel to process them.

We suggest athletes pack a change of clothes, especially if they compete outdoors, and snacks prior to going to their competition because the sample collection process can be unpredictable. The doping control station will only have water available for the athletes. Athletes are responsible for producing identification, so they should also have their Canada Games ID, or other identification, with them.

How will sample collection take place at outdoor events? Will there be a second location?

If an athlete is competing at an outdoor venue, they will be notified then brought to the indoor doping control station by the chaperone or DCO.

What kind of modifications to the sample collection process can an athlete request?

Modifications can be requested for procedures that do not follow the normal sample collection process. For example, athletes are responsible for maintaining control of their sample and sealing the samples themselves, but if the athlete is unable to do so, they can request that a DCO or representative hold the sample collection equipment to assist them. Modifications do not include rescheduling the sample collection process or changing the type of sample (urine or blood) the athlete is to provide.

Any modifications to the process will be documented on the doping control form.

What does intelligence-based testing mean? Does the athlete have the right to know what 'intelligence' triggered the testing?

The CCES receives reports and tips from a variety of sources (CCES Integrity Hotline, monitoring national and international development, field observations, performance monitoring etc.), and this information is used to assist in test plan development.

To protect the integrity of the anti-doping program and maintain confidentiality, we do not divulge what intelligence we received or where it came from.

If an athlete stays at a venue for sample collection, who is responsible for their transportation back to the athletes' village?

The local organizing committee will arrange transportation for the athlete back to the village. Athletes should also let their team personnel know they've been selected for sample collection and that different transportation arrangements are needed.

How long after a test does it typically take to get results?

Sample analysis can take 3 to 4 weeks to complete. If there is an adverse analytical finding (positive test), the athlete will be notified through their national sport organization (NSO). Athletes are not notified of negative test results.

What is the false positive test rate for doping control tests?

While data collection does not provide a specific rate for false positives, the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) does have international standards in place to address the occurrence of a false adverse analytical finding.

These standards identify detailed corrective actions for a laboratory that has a false positive and ensures the affected athlete is not sanctioned.

During the Canada Winter Games, how many tests will occur?

To ensure an effective testing program, sample collection must be unpredictable. With this in mind, we do not make our testing plans public, which includes the total number of tests that will be collected at events.

How often have positive tests occurred at the Canada Winter Games?

We do not disclose the specific competition or event information where an anti-doping rule violation occurred. That said, we do disclose any anti-doping rule violations through a media release (except in specific circumstances).

PROHIBITED SUBSTANCES, CHECKING MEDICATIONS, AND MEDICAL EXEMPTIONS

If an athlete gets sick at the Games, can anyone help them choose over-the-counter medications that are not prohibited?

[Global DRO](#) is the best tool to help athletes know which medications are permitted and which are prohibited. Each province will have medical personnel on site who have received anti-doping education, who can assist athletes with selecting non-prohibited medications.

Is there a recommended cold/flu medication that is free of prohibited substances?

The CCES does not recommend medications for athletes. Please visit [Global DRO](#) to check the status in sport of a cold or flu medication that is appropriate for and available to the athlete.

Are there foods that may contain prohibited substances (e.g., meat, vegetables, fruits)?

There are currently no restrictions around food in Canada that may contain prohibited substances. Due to regulation, food in Canada is quite safe, from an anti-doping perspective.

What sanctions are directed at adults and support personnel in an athlete's circle of care (e.g., coach, parent), rather than to the athlete themselves?

Only athletes and designated athlete support personnel can receive anti-doping rule violations and sanctions because they are subject to the rules of the Canadian Anti-Doping Program (CADP).

Some violations apply to both athletes and designated athlete support personnel:

- Tampering with any part of doping control,
- Possession of a prohibited substance or method,
- Trafficking a prohibited substance or method,
- Administering a prohibited substance or method to an athlete,
- Complicity with another anti-doping rule violation,
- Prohibited association with an athlete support personnel serving a sanction, and
- Acts to discourage or retaliate against reporting doping to authorities.

There are a few violations that apply only to athletes:

- Presence of a prohibited substance in the athlete's sample,
- Use of a prohibited substance, and
- Evading, refusing, or failing to submit to sample collection.
- Athletes in the [Registered Testing Pool \(RTP\)](#) can also receive violations for missing tests or failing to file their whereabouts. This will not apply to an overwhelming majority of Canada Games athletes.

These violations are all defined in Rule 2 of the [CADP](#). You can also learn more via the Violations and Sanctions module in [True Sport Clean: Untracked](#).

How far back should an athlete declare the use of a medication, supplement, or medical intervention during sample collection?

Athletes should report medications and supplements used in the last seven (7) days and any blood transfusions in the last three (3) months.

What is the “in-competition” period? Does this period change from sport to sport?

The “in-competition” period is the period commencing at 11:59 p.m. on the day before a competition in which the athlete is scheduled to participate through to the end of that competition and the related sample collection process.

How long before the games can an athlete consume a prohibited medication without risk of a positive test?

Unfortunately, there is no definite answer for this question. It depends on the half-life of the medication and the individual athlete’s physiology. For this reason, the CCES is unable to give specific washout periods for most medications. However, there is a process in place that allows athletes to take prohibited medications for medically justified reasons called a [Medical Exemption](#).

Does an athlete with prescription medication containing a prohibited substance need a Therapeutic Use Exemption prior to competing?

Only athletes in the National Athlete Pool (NAP) require a Medical Exemption prior to competition. If your child is not in the NAP – and most Canada Games athletes are not – they can apply for a Medical Exemption retroactively, after a positive test. Athletes are notified by their NSO that they have been included in the NAP and will be asked to review their rights and responsibilities by signing an athlete contract.

What measures should I take if my athlete is taking a prescription medication that contains a prohibited substance?

If your child is taking a prescription medication that contains a prohibited substance, they will be able to apply for a Medical Exemption. Please visit the [Medical Exemption Wizard](#) to determine your child’s application requirements.

Can an athlete use natural health products instead of antibiotics to avoid inadvertent doping?

First, most antibiotics are not prohibited, and you can easily verify if they are or not via [Global DRO](#).

Natural health products are considered to be supplements. Due to the current lack of regulation of the supplement industry, the CCES is unable to provide a guarantee that these products are free of prohibited substances.

An athlete’s health is the most important consideration, and you should not withhold or avoid a prescribed medication due to anti-doping concerns. If an athlete is prescribed antibiotics, or any other medication, determine whether the medication is prohibited and if a medical exception is required. The medical exemption process is in place to make sure athletes can use the prescription medications they require without the fear of repercussions.

Can I obtain a list of prohibited substances?

To refer to the World Anti-Doping Agency's Prohibited List, click [here](#). To look up a specific substance, please use [Global DRO](#) instead of consulting the List.

Are Tylenol and Advil considered prohibited?

There are different formulations of Tylenol and Advil, some of which are prohibited and others not. To check the status of a medication, visit [Global DRO](#).

SUPPLEMENTS

Are meal supplements and meal replacement shakes considered food or supplements?

It depends on the product. In Canada, products labeled "meal replacement" must adhere to the Food and Drugs Regulations and are considered foods.

In 2022, a new Food and Drugs category was created called "supplemented foods," which includes things like electrolyte and energy drinks. These are also considered food products and have clear labeling requirements.

Products not clearly labeled "meal replacement" or "supplemented food" should be considered supplements and treated accordingly.

Is there a list of approved supplement companies?

The CCES doesn't approve supplements for athlete use. While a supplement manufacturer may have generally good practices, we recommend athletes use supplements that are batch-tested for prohibited substances. These tests should also be done independently from the manufacturer, so that they're transparent and not biased. A few examples of certification programs include [BSCG](#), [Informed Choice](#), [Informed Sport](#) and [NSF Certified for Sport](#).

How do we know which supplements have been tested? Is there an app or a database?

There are several good third-party testing programs, including NSF Certified for Sport, Informed Choice, Informed Sport, and BSCG. These will help you check which supplements have been tested and search by category for supplements that have been tested to help minimize risk.

NSF Certified for Sport has easy-to-use [iOS and Android apps](#).

My child is going to have serious jet lag from travel to P.E.I. Is there a brand of melatonin that is safe for athletes?

The CCES recommends any decision about supplementation, whether for nutrition, performance, or recovery, to be made under advisement of medical professionals. That said, if an athlete decides to use a melatonin, or any supplement, consider using one that has been batch tested to minimize the risk.

What about cannabidiol (CBD)?

CBD should be treated with caution. While cannabidiol isn't prohibited, most CBD contains some amount of the psychoactive cannabinoid THC, which is prohibited. Athletes have tested positive for cannabis in competition due to the use of CBD products. You can learn more about cannabis in sport on the [CCES website](#).

Can parents and caregivers rely on a supplement manufacturer's information?

It's challenging. Supplements aren't subject to the same strict labeling requirements as food, which makes it difficult to know exactly what's in them. That's why third-party batch testing is so important: to test for prohibited substances and to validate what's listed on the label.

There are protein powders that are not batch tested. Should these be avoided? Or should we search for individual ingredients in Global DRO?

Searching for listed ingredients is a great way to quickly identify red flags. For example, if a supplement lists "ligandrol" or "ostarine" as an ingredient, a Global DRO search would tell you immediately that those are prohibited anabolic agents. However, as discussed, the label may not be reliable.

If we broadly categorize supplements as lower risk and higher risk, we could place nutritional supplements like vitamins, minerals and protein into the lower-risk category and performance-oriented supplements into the higher-risk category. For all supplements, we strongly encourage seeking options that have been batch-tested, and to declare everything during doping control.

How do I know if pre-workout supplements are allowed or not allowed?

Pre-workout mixes are a category of supplement that have caused positive doping control tests in the past. Many pre-workout products make claims about increased energy, which can indicate the presence of a stimulant. Higenamine, which may be listed as nandina domestica, demethylcoclaurine, norcoclaurine, tinospora crispa, aconitum japonicum, gnetum parvifolium or asarum heterotropoides, is one common example of a prohibited stimulant that may be included in supplements. Refer to one of the testing programs we suggest to see if your supplement has been tested for prohibited substances and truth in labeling.

Is there a list of ingredients in supplements to avoid that is available for reference?

There is no reference list available, but there are some red flags to watch for that will make it easier to avoid prohibited substances. Supplement labels often make it hard to know exactly what they contain. Avoid the following:

- Supplements that make claims of extreme or drug-like effects,
- Ingredients that are an opaque combination of letters and numbers,
- Ingredients listed as "proprietary blends" or similar, and
- Ingredients ending in -ine, -ex, -iol or -ol, -stene, -lol, -ane and -one, which can indicate substances across many categories of the Prohibited List.

You can find more information on the risks of supplements the [CCES website](#).