

Q&A: 2009 Prohibited List

What major changes does the 2009 List of Prohibited Substances and Methods include compared to the 2008 List?

- The 2009 List includes modifications in relation to the status of specified substances in order to align the 2009 List with the more flexible sanctions, able to be imposed in cases involving “specified substances”, set forth in the revised World Anti-Doping Code (2009 Code) to come into effect on January 1, 2009.
- Alpha-reductase inhibitors, a class of masking agents which used to be banned in- and out-of-competition, were removed from the 2009 List. This class of substances, which includes for example finasteride, has been rendered ineffective as masking agents of steroids through close consideration of steroid profiles by anti-doping laboratories.

As part of the development by WADA of the Athlete Passport concept—the objective of which is to monitor an athlete’s biological parameters over time in order to detect abnormal variations that could indicate potential doping—and following research and advances in anti-doping science, WADA accredited laboratories are now able to and required to systematically and closely consider steroid profiles in urine as part of the doping control process, which allows them to circumvent the masking agent properties of alpha-reductase inhibitors.

- The 2009 List reflects the expanding scientific knowledge and understanding of doping practices and trends, as well as advances in anti-doping science and the recognition by WADA stakeholders of the importance of further harmonization of the fight against doping through the revised Code and International Standards.

Why was the composition of specified substances changed?

- Modifications were made in relation to specified substances in order to align the 2009 List with the more flexible sanctions set forth in the revised Code. The objective of this flexibility, which was approved by WADA’s stakeholders as part of their unanimous endorsement of the revised Code in 2007, is to allow for enhanced sanctions for deliberate doping offenders, and reduced sanctions for inadvertent cheaters or for athletes who can unequivocally establish that the substance involved was not intended to enhance performance.
- As a result, while all prohibited methods, the classes of anabolic agents and hormones, as well as a number of stimulants and hormone antagonists and modulators so identified on the 2009 List

maintain their status, the remainder of prohibited substances will now be considered as specified substances for the purpose of more flexible sanctions.

- This means that where athletes can clearly establish how a specified substance entered their body or came into their possession, and that such substance was not intended to enhance sport performance, the sanction may be reduced as low as a reprimand and no period of ineligibility.
- At the same time, the use of non-specified substances should be more likely to result in a standard two-year ban for a first anti-doping rule violation, or to a ban of up to four years in cases of aggravating circumstances under the revised Code. These circumstances can include, but are not limited to, being part of a large doping scheme, an athlete having used multiple prohibited substances or a prohibited substance on multiple occasions, or an athlete engaging in deceptive or obstructing conduct to avoid the detection or adjudication of an anti-doping rule violation. Aggravating circumstances also include situations in which a normal individual would be likely to benefit from the performance-enhancing effects of the anti-doping rule violation beyond the otherwise applicable period of ineligibility.
- Specified substances, as defined in the revised Code, are not necessarily less serious agents for purposes of doping than other prohibited substances. For that reason, an athlete who does not meet the reduction criteria could still receive up to a four-year period of ineligibility in case of aggravating circumstances. However, there is a greater likelihood that specified substances, as opposed to non-specified substances, could be susceptible to a credible, non-doping explanation.

How were stimulants classified as specified or non-specified?

- In order to determine which stimulants (prohibited in-competition only) should be classified as specified or non-specified in the 2009 List, the international experts serving on WADA's scientific committees carefully considered various parameters.
- These included the potential of these stimulants to enhance performance in sport, their risk to health, their general use in medicinal products, their legitimate market availability, their illicit use, their legal/controlled status in various countries, their history and potential of abuse in sport, their potential of addiction, the likelihood of approval for therapeutic use, their pharmacology, and other scientific elements, as well as the likelihood of a non-doping explanation.

- As a result of this process and of the broad consultation carried out as part of the yearly preparation of the List, stimulants identified as non-specified substances in the 2009 List (and therefore subject to a two-year sanction in the absence of aggravating or attenuating circumstances) include for example amphetamine, cocaine, bromantan and modafinil.

Why weren't substances such as caffeine, pseudoephedrine and sildenafil (Viagra) included in the 2009 List?

- Since 2004, caffeine has been included in WADA's Monitoring Program. This program includes substances which are not prohibited in sport, but which WADA monitors in order to detect patterns of misuse in sport.
- Arguments that led WADA's stakeholders to take caffeine off the List in 2004 included research indicating that caffeine is performance-decreasing above the 12 microgram/ml threshold that was historically used in sport. In addition, caffeine is metabolized at very different rates in individuals. Many experts believe that caffeine is ubiquitous in beverages and food and that reducing the threshold in order to unmask cheaters might therefore create a serious risk of sanctioning athletes for social or diet consumption of caffeine.
- With this background, and since no excessive abuse of caffeine was observed in 2008 as part of the monitoring of this substance, caffeine was kept off the 2009 List and will remain in WADA's Monitoring Program.
- Pseudoephedrine will also remain part of the Monitoring Program. International experts serving in WADA's scientific committees considered that further scientific elements need to be collected before reconsidering the status of pseudoephedrine. WADA is funding additional research on the excretion profile of this substance and continues to monitor the substance.
- As regards sildenafil (Viagra), WADA is aware of studies presented in relation to the potential of sildenafil to restore pulmonary capacities at very high altitudes. WADA is currently funding a number of research projects on the effects of sildenafil at various altitudes. These projects are ongoing.