



RACE DAY TREATMENT POLICY

Introduction

A fundamental principle of Australian harness racing is that horses must race free of the pharmacological (or toxicological) effect of drugs or other substances.

To assist in maintaining this principle, it is not permitted to administer any medication (or treatment) to a horse on race day (from midnight on day of race).

Relevant Australian Harness Racing Rules (AHRR)

AHRR 193 (3) states:

A person shall not administer or allow or cause to be administered any medication to a horse on race day prior to such horse running in a race.

AHRR 193(5) states:

The Stewards shall order the withdrawal from a race any horse that has received any medication in contravention of sub-rule (3).

AHRR193 (6) states:

For the purpose of this Rule, medication means any treatment with drugs or other substances.

AHRR 196C states:

196C. (1) A person must not administer an alkalinising agent in any manner to a horse which is engaged to run in a race:

(a) at any time on the day of the scheduled race and prior to the start of the race;

(3) Where the Stewards are satisfied that a horse has, or is likely to have been, administered any alkalinising agent contrary to sub-rule (1), the Stewards may prevent the horse from starting in any relevant race.

Guiding Principle

As indicated by the above-mentioned rules, the administration of any medication to a horse on race day is prohibited. Only normal feeding and supplementation that can be achieved by the horse voluntarily eating or drinking is considered acceptable on race day prior to a race **except for the feeding of alkalinising agents (see further below)**. Any person who acts outside this guiding principle may find themselves subject to hefty penalties and will also have their horse withdrawn from its relevant event.

All forms of administration on race day are prohibited, whether a substance is administered by way of injection, stomach tube, paste, syringe dose, application, inhalation or other method.

Administration of Alkalinising Agents

Australian Rule of Harness Racing 196C prohibits the administration of alkalinising agents by any route on race day, **including in the feed**. Exceptions to this prohibition are balanced, commercial electrolyte supplements which may contain some alkalinising agents, but which can be demonstrated to have negligible effects on plasma TCO₂ when administered in feed according to the manufacturer's recommendations for normal daily use. Such products include Equilyte[®], Race Electrolyte[®], and Salkavite[®].

Alkalinising agents that must not be administered either on the day of the race or within the one clear day of racing include, but are not limited to, bicarbonates, citrates, succinates, acetates, propionates, maleates, lactates and trometamol (THAM, tris buffer or trometamine) and also include products marketed as urinary alkalinisers and hind gut buffers.

Products that contain alkalinising agents and which fall within the definition and are prohibited include proprietary formulations such as: Sodium Bicarbonate ("bicarb"), Baladene[®], Lang's Solution[®] for intravenous use, Neutra-Syrup[®], Neutralka[®], Neutrolene[®], Neutrolene Plus[®] and Neutradex[®] and any other products that are marketed as lactic acid buffering or neutralising products. **(Products mentioned above are only a small selection of products available. Please seek advice for other individual products.)**

Products that claim to provide Pharmacological Effects

There are numerous products, often herbal or homeopathic type preparations, that claim to provide significant pharmacological effects such as a diuretic action, analgesia, anti-inflammatory actions, bronchodilator actions or the like and also claim to be undetectable by

laboratory testing. If a product claims it can provide a therapeutic or pharmacological effect, it will be assumed that the product was administered to the horse with the intent of achieving that effect and it is a medication (treatment), regardless of whether it is purported to be safe, non-detectable, 'harmless' or 'all natural'. Current non-detectability of the active ingredient of a herbal or other product does not mean that the substance is permitted or legal. Testing for the active ingredients of such products may be introduced without warning and the ingredient may be defined as a prohibited substance under AHRR 188A.

Application of Hoof Oils / Dressings

Application of standard hoof oils or dressing is permitted on race day, with the exception that products which contain a medication (any substance) that has or claims to have a therapeutic effect such as analgesia or anti-inflammatory actions are not permitted and would be considered as race day treatment in contravention of the Rules.

Shampoos

Routine, non-medicated shampoos are permitted to be used on race day prior to a race.

Physical Therapy as Treatment

Harness Racing Victoria considers other physical and complementary therapies to be treatments which cannot be administered on the day of racing. Such treatments include, but are not limited to, acupuncture (including laser treatment) and magnetic field therapy.

Vibratory massage systems may be used in the stable on race day but are not permitted for use at the racecourse.

The application of ice boots and 'Equine Rocktape' may be used in the stable on race day but are not permitted on the racecourse prior to a horse running in a race.

Further Information

Please contact the Stewards department at Harness Racing Victoria or consult your veterinarian for further advice or information.