



Cobalt threshold introduction into the Greyhounds Australasia Rules

Warning to trainers – Cobalt usage in greyhounds

On 1 September 2015, Greyhounds Australasia will be introducing a urinary threshold for cobalt of 100 ng/mL within GAR 83 (10) as follows:

“Cobalt at or below a mass concentration of 100 nanograms per millilitre in a sample of urine taken from a greyhound will not breach the provisions of sub rule (1A) or (2) of this rule.”

Trainers are advised to be extremely cautious using products that contain cobalt close to racing as this may inadvertently lead to a rise in urinary cobalt levels.

Cobalt is a naturally occurring trace element that is normally present in greyhounds at very low levels as a result of normal dietary intake. Cobalt is also present in the structure of vitamin B12 (cyanocobalamin).

Excessive amounts of cobalt has an effect on the cardiovascular system (GAR 1) as a haematopoietic agent and as a hypoxia inducible factor (HIF)-1 stabiliser (GAR 79A(2)(xiii)) and therefore has the potential to improve athletic performance. Therefore cobalt is both a prohibited substance and permanently banned prohibited substance when present at concentrations above that which would naturally occur through routine nutritional sources.

This threshold has been determined following a national population survey that measured urinary cobalt levels in 762 greyhounds sampled on race day. It has been set at a level to allow for normal amounts of cobalt supplementation through routine nutritional sources.

However, trainers are advised that the administration, particularly by injection and on multiple occasions or at larger ‘off-label’ doses, of certain registered vitamin supplements close to racing may result in a level of cobalt in a subsequent sample that exceeds this threshold. Trainers are therefore advised to avoid the use of these supplements close to racing.

Examples of injectable vitamin supplements that contain cobalt and/or vitamin B12 include: V.A.M., Hemo-15, Hemoplex, Amino-lite 34X, Kynoselen, Tripart, Coforta, Folic Acid and Vitamin B-12, Dynajec and Cophos B. Various parasiticides, drenches and oral haematinics also contain cobalt.

For a current list of APVMA registered products that contain cobalt or vitamin B12 (cyanocobalamin) visit: <https://portal.apvma.gov.au/pubcris>

For further information please contact your state controlling body.