

NCAA 2015-16 drug-testing exceptions procedures (medical exceptions)

The NCAA list of [banned drug classes](#) (NCAA Bylaw 31.2.3) is composed of substances that are generally purported to be performance enhancing and/or potentially harmful to the health and safety of the student-athlete.

The NCAA recognizes that some banned substances are used for legitimate medical purposes. Accordingly, the NCAA allows exception to be made for those student-athletes with a documented medical history demonstrating the need for treatment with a banned medication. Exceptions may be granted for substances included in the following classes of banned drugs: anabolic agents*, stimulants, beta blockers, diuretics, anti-estrogens, beta-2 agonists and peptide hormone* (see subpart 2 below). No medical exception review is available for substances in the class of street drugs.

1. Alternative non-banned medications for the treatment of various conditions exist and should be considered before an exception is pursued.
2. In the event that the student-athlete and the physician (in coordination with sports-medicine staff at the student-athlete's institution) agree that no appropriate alternative medication to the use of the banned substance is available, the decision may be made to use a medication that falls under an NCAA class of banned drugs.

NOTE the use of an ***anabolic agent or peptide hormone must be approved by the NCAA before the student-athlete is allowed to participate in competition while taking these medications**. The institution, through its director of athletics, may request an exception for use of an anabolic agent or peptide hormone by submitting to the NCAA medical documentation from the prescribing physician supporting the diagnosis and treatment. (contact mwilfert@ncaa.org)

3. The institution should maintain documentation that supports the use of medication in the student-athlete's medical record on campus. The documentation can be a letter or copies of medical notes from the prescribing physician that documents how the diagnosis was reached, and that the student-athlete has a medical history demonstrating the need for treatment with the banned medication. The letter should contain information as to the diagnosis (including appropriate verification of the diagnosis), medical history and dosage information.

ADHD Medication: for a medical exception request for a positive test involving stimulant medication to treat **ADHD**, the NCAA requires the documentation be accompanied by the required form “**NCAA Medical Exception Documentation Reporting Form to Support the Diagnosis of Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) and Treatment with Banned Stimulant Medication,**” located at www.ncaa.org/drugtesting

4. Unless requesting a review for the medical use of an anabolic agent or peptide hormone, a student-athlete's medical records or physicians' letters should not be sent to the NCAA unless requested by the NCAA. Also, the use of any substance need not be reported to the drug-testing crew at the time of NCAA drug testing.

5. In the event that a student-athlete is tested by the NCAA and tests positive for a substance for which the institution desires an exception, normal procedures for reporting positive test results will be followed (See [NCAA Drug-testing program protocol section no. 8.0](#)). The institution may request an exception at the time of notification of the positive drug test (A sample) by submitting documentation to The National Center for Drug Free Sport. If the institution fails to provide medical documentation to Drug Free Sport before the "B" sample is reported as positive to the institution, the student-athlete will be withheld from competition until such time the documentation is received, reviewed and the medical exception granted. (contact mbockelman@drugfreesport.com)

6. Requests for medical exceptions will be reviewed by the chair of the drug-education and testing subcommittee and the physicians of the NCAA Committee on Competitive Safeguards and Medical Aspects of Sports.

7. The NCAA will inform the director of athletics regarding the outcome of the exception request. In the event that the exception is not granted, the institution may appeal this action according to [Section 8.0 of the drug-testing protocol](#).

Educational material

- [NCAA guidelines to document ADHD treatment with banned stimulant medications](#)
- [Reporting form to support the diagnosis of ADHD](#)
- [Memo: Banned stimulant medication reporting guidelines for attention deficit hyperactivity disorder \(ADHD\) treatment](#)
- [Frequently asked questions: Addendum to the January 2009 guidelines](#)
- [Student-athlete educational poster: Report all medicines](#)
- Clinicians seeking more guidance on conducting a comprehensive clinical assessment, please review this [sample evaluation format](#)