



BRITISH ROWING

Supplement Policy

2020

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Introduction and policy statement

Background

In June 2020, a revised Supplement Policy was considered and published. This supersedes the existing 2016 policy. This matter was discussed by the Sport Science Senior Management Group with the outcome that the revised policy be proposed for formal adoption by the Board. The revisions were approved August 2020.

Supplement Policy

A supplement should be considered to be any substance consumed deliberately by a rower to enhance their daily diet, (a nutritional supplement) or to elicit a performance enhancing or ergogenic effect (a Performance Supplement), or to self-treat ill health or injury.

EU Law defines a food supplement as ‘any food the purpose of which is to supplement the normal diet and which is a concentrated source of a vitamin or mineral or other substance with a nutritional or physiological effect, alone or in combination and is sold in dose form’.

Medication prescribed by a doctor is not a supplement and does not fall under the Supplements Policy. All medications should be checked on Global DRO [www.globaldro.com] to ensure they are not prohibited in sport.

In the UK, food supplements are required to be regulated as foods and are subject to the provisions of general food law including the Food Information Regulations 2014 and The Food Supplements Regulations 2003. There is no requirement in food law to take sport safety or doping issues into account. Ingredients do not have to be listed on product labels if they are less than 25% of the final product. These ingredients may include substances prohibited by the World Anti-Doping Code.

This does not take into account food legislation in other countries which are not uniform, and as such supplements bought overseas, over the internet or by mail order pose an even greater threat.

Assess the Need

British Rowing strongly advises against the arbitrary use of supplements.

Before taking a supplement ask yourself if there is anything else that could be improved – are you training smart, are you giving yourself the best recovery opportunities and are you consuming

enough calories to fuel your training? Are these calories primed before and after exercise for instance? This assessment may require reference to the GBRT Basic Nutrition Guide and discussions with your coach, your parent, a nutritionist or your doctor. The GBRT Basic Nutrition guide provides practical information on nutrition for an aspiring rower and recipes which in some areas will provide a cost-effective alternative to supplement use (e.g. hydration drinks, protein shakes). The guide can be found on the British Rowing website: <https://www.britishrowing.org/knowledge/online-learning/training-advice/> In addition, by searching 'nutrition' on the British Rowing webpage you can find related articles for ideas and recipes.

In rowing, no vitamin or mineral supplements should be required if a rower is consuming adequate energy from a variety of foods to maintain bodyweight whilst training. However, there are circumstances in which British Rowing strongly recommend rowers seek dietary assessment by a specialist¹ before using supplements: rowers following a vegetarian or vegan diet, rowers who have sustained an injury or who need to make weight, and rowers adopting a special diet for medical reasons.

Junior rowers should not be using any supplements without medical prescription; rowers under 18 years of age are advised to concentrate on learning and implementing good training, good diet and well-rehearsed recovery strategies.

Assess the Risk

If a supplement is thought to be advisable after assessment (e.g. an electrolyte drink for training in hot conditions) it is important that a rower uses **ONLY** batch-tested supplements. All batch-tested supplements in the UK are listed on www.informedsport.com. For more information about the batch-testing process please refer to the Supplements Module in the Clean Sport Awards on [RowHow](#).

Assess the Consequence

Any use of supplements should be regarded as the final tweaking in performance rather than the foundation to performance. The arbitrary use of supplements brings significant risks both to your health and to your longevity in sport. All rowers must be aware that an inadvertent positive drug test as a result of supplement use could result in a ban from all sport of up to 4 years.

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¹ The Sport and Exercise Nutrition Register <http://www.senr.org.uk/> lists suitably qualified and experienced sport and exercise nutritionists who are knowledgeable of athlete requirements in accordance with the anti-doping rules.