



RACING AND WAGERING WESTERN AUSTRALIA

Intra-articular Corticosteroid Treatment Stand-down Period

Trainers and veterinarians should note the introduction of an Australian Rule of Racing that prohibits the administration of an intra-articular (“into the joint”) corticosteroid preparation to a Thoroughbred racehorse within **8 Clear Days** of racing. This Rule is effective from 1st August 2014.

The Australian Racing Board has made this decision in the best interests of the welfare of the horse and safety of riders whilst being cognisant of Australian racing conditions.

The Rule reads as follows:

“AR.64M. A horse that has been subjected to an intra-articular administration of a corticosteroid preparation, whether the preparation is administered alone or in combination with other preparations, is ineligible to participate in any race, official trial or jumpout at any time during the 8 Clear Days (as defined in AR.1) following midnight on the day of the administration.”

Note: A **Clear Day** is defined within the Rule to mean a twenty-four hour period from 12:01 a.m. to 12 midnight. For practical purposes, a clear day restriction means that the calculation of the number of days for which the procedure/treatment is banned does not take into account the day of treatment nor the day of racing.

As such a stand down time of 8 clear days equates to 10 regular days when including the day of administration and the day of racing.

For the purpose of AR.64M and by way of example, if a horse was subjected to an intra-articular administration of a corticosteroid at any time on a Monday (1st day of the month), that horse would be ineligible to race until the Wednesday of the following week (10th day of the month). Similarly, a horse treated with an intra-articular corticosteroid on a Thursday is ineligible to race until the 2nd Saturday after treatment.

Corticosteroid preparations that are subject to this rule include, but are not limited to: triamcinolone (*Kenacort, Triamalone Forte*), betamethasone (*Celestone Chronodose*), dexamethasone and methylprednisolone (*Depo-Medrol*) preparations. They are all Schedule 4 Prescription Medicines or Prescription Animal Remedies, and in the case of an intra-articular administration, must be administered by a veterinarian.

The minimum stand down time is intended as a minimum period before racing within which **any** corticosteroid preparation must **not** be administered intra-articularly, including the shorter-acting corticosteroids. This stand down period must not be confused with the recommended “withdrawal” time of the particular drug used. The “withdrawal” period for a prohibited substance is calculated to ensure a horse is presented clear of the prohibited substance when sampled. In certain situations, specifically for longer acting corticosteroid preparations such as methylprednisolone and for injections into low volume joints such as the lower hock joints, the recommended “withdrawal” period may be much longer than the minimum stand down time prescribed by AR.64M, and as such must continue to be observed.

Note: The administration of intra-articular corticosteroids is “treatment” according to AR.178F and therefore must be recorded by a trainer and/or their veterinarian as required by this Rule. Examination of treatment records will be one of the tools used by the Stewards to ensure trainer compliance with AR.64M.