



Netball Australia SUPPLEMENTS POLICY

1 February 2025

In the spirit of Reconciliation, Netball Australia acknowledges Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the Traditional Custodians of this ancient unceded land where we live, work and play netball on.

We honour the continuing cultures, languages, and heritage of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples whose cultural, spiritual, and ancestral connections to the lands, sky, and waters has endured since time immemorial.

We pay our respects to Elders past and present, and we acknowledge and value the significant and continuing contributions Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples make within our community.

Netball Australia is committed to Reconciliation. We acknowledge the need to reflect on our shared history in order to build a vision for a reconciled and prosperous future for all within our sport. One built on mutual respect, equity, authentic collaboration, and genuine truth-telling.

Where relevant, in this Policy - reference to Netball Australia includes Suncorp Super Netball and the Confident Girls Foundation.

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A. Purpose

This Netball Australia (**NA**) Supplements Policy (the **Policy**) provides information to Participants regarding the use of Supplements in netball. It also sets out the requirements and procedures that must be followed in the event that an Athlete is prescribed or provided a Supplement as part of any Nutrition Performance Plan.

This Policy details:

- a) What is a Supplement
- b) How to assess if a Supplement is safe to use, and whether it could be harmful to a person's health
- c) Whether a Supplement is prohibited for use in sport
- d) How to use a Supplement in a way that may benefit training, performance and recovery
- e) How to obtain approval for use of a Supplement
- f) How to seek approval to enter into a sponsorship or endorsement arrangement with a Supplement company
- g) What may happen if there is a breach of this Policy

This Policy is based on the principle, supported by medical opinion that athletes are best served by eating a well-planned, performance-focused diet to support training and competition, as well as promoting the long-term health of the athlete (i.e food first approach).

This Policy does however acknowledge the small, but sometimes valuable role that Supplements may play, as an addition to a “food first” Nutrition Performance Plan, in meeting the specific demands of training and sporting performance as well as treating specific medical condition e.g. iron deficiency.

NA recognises that there are two categories of Elite Programs (the traditional high performance pathway programs (that include the National Netball Championships, SSN, Australian Representative Squads) and other programs supported or endorsed by NA (such as the participation of the Australian Kelpies Men's Netball Team in International Test Series, the PacificAus program, Marie Little Shield and other Sub-Elite Programs, the **Sub-Elite Programs**)).

For the Sub-Elite Programs, NA has limited oversight of these programs, servicing, delivery and personnel and that the sports science and sports medicine servicing will vary from program to program (including funding available).

Accordingly, this Supplements Policy does not apply to Participants in the Sub-Elite Programs.

This Policy promotes education for Participants about Supplement use and the potential risks that Supplement use may pose.

NA is committed to evidence-based practice and ensuring that Participants consult with the Team Doctor and/or the Team Dietitian prior to the use of any Supplement, which should be part of the Athlete's Nutrition Performance Plan.

It is important to note that the Supplement industry is not as tightly regulated as prescription medications, although the Therapeutic Goods Administration (*TGA*) has been working to improve standards over recent years. This means information and products available on the market may not be scientifically proven to provide any benefit in sport, they may vary in quality, and use may also lead to accidental doping and/or potential risks to health.

B. Scope and Exclusions

This Policy applies to Participants, NA and Netball Organisations.

In addition, this Policy provides a guideline for Pathway Athletes, to help them to make good decisions regarding the safe and appropriate use of Supplements.

This Policy does not apply to the Sub-Elite Programs or community netball.

C. Definitions

Defined terms not otherwise defined in this Policy have been defined in, and have the meaning given to them in the Sports Medicine Policy for Elite Programs and the Netball Integrity Policy Framework, Conduct & Disciplinary Policy.

In this Policy, the following definitions apply:

<i>AMS</i>	means the Athlete Management System.
<i>Ban</i>	is a prohibition from participating in certain activities for a specified period. The Participant remains subject to all policies and rules of NA during the Ban.
<i>Batch Test/ Batch Testing/ Batch Tested</i>	means a product that has been screened by an approved accredited organisation where no prohibited substance has been detected in the batch.
<i>CMO</i>	means the Chief Medical Officer appointed by NA from time to time.
<i>NA Supplement Panel</i>	means the panel of experts appointed by the NA Dietitian to govern this Policy in accordance with section 11 of this Policy.
<i>Pathway Athlete</i>	means any Athlete participating in the NNC.
<i>Supplements</i>	includes single or multi-ingredient product in powder, limited volume liquid, pill or capsule form providing nutrients or other dietary components to achieve a specific health and/or performance benefit.
<i>Team Doctor</i>	means the Australian Netball Diamonds doctor or the SSN Club doctor or the MO doctor as the case may be.
<i>Team Dietitian</i>	means the NA dietitian or the SSN Club dietitian or the MO dietitian as the case may be.

D. Key Policy Principles

- a) NA has no requirements or expectation that Athletes participating in Elite Programs should take Supplements.

- b) NA recognises that Supplements may be taken and is committed to establishing a best practice approach for the use of Supplements, with a focus on Athlete safety, and evidence-based prescription and use.
- c) NA acknowledges that some Supplements may contain substances included on the World Anti-Doping Agency's (*WADA*) List of Prohibited Substances and Methods and that there is no guarantee that any Supplement is completely free from prohibited substances, despite any claims made by Supplement manufacturers or clearance by third party auditing companies. NA recognises that third party auditing and Batch Testing can minimise the risks associated with identifying the supplement's ingredients, including any traces of prohibited substances or contamination.
- d) This Policy references the current AIS Sports Supplement Framework (noting the AIS Sports Supplement Framework is presently being reviewed, and NA will consider any updates to this Policy, upon consideration of any revised AIS Sports Supplement Framework).
- e) This Policy and the AIS framework are not substitutes for an Athlete seeking professional advice from the Team Doctor and/or the Team Dietitian.
- f) Team Doctors and/or Team Dietitians can only approve the use of Supplements in accordance with this Policy.

E. Other Related Policies and Documents

The following policies and documents also apply to the application of this Policy and must be adhered to at all times:

- a) Netball Integrity Policies;
- b) NA Tribunal Rules;
- c) Netball Integrity Policy Framework, Conduct & Disciplinary Policy;
- d) National Anti-Doping Policy,
- e) NA Sports Medicine Policy for Elite Programs; and
- f) [NA Sports Supplement Application Form](#)

Also see:

- [AIS Sports Supplement ABCD Classification System](#)
- [WADA's List of Prohibited Substances and Methods](#)
- [Resources | Sport Integrity Australia](#)
- <https://www.sportintegrity.gov.au/resources#toc3>
- <https://www.sportintegrity.gov.au/what-we-do/anti-doping/supplements-sport>
- <https://www.sportintegrity.gov.au/resources/therapeutic-use-exemption/regulation-and-anti-doping-risk-of-supplements>
- [GlobalDRO](#)
- The Sport Integrity Australia App (includes a database of supplements sold in Australia and a tool to assist users in determining if a substance is prohibited).

1. Supplements in Sport

- 1.1 There are a number of documents from AIS, Sports Integrity Australia (SIA) and NA that consider both efficacy and risk of using supplements in sport (to the health of an athlete and anti-doping measures).
- 1.2 AIS Sports Supplement Framework
 - 1.2.1 NA adopts the AIS Sports Supplement Framework. It is recommended that all Participants regularly review the AIS Sports Supplement Framework. More information can be found [here](#). This framework predominantly outlines efficacy and appropriate use but also provides advice on health and anti-doping risk.
- 1.3 Improper use of drugs and medicine
 - 1.3.1 Improper use of drugs and medications is governed by the Sports Medicine Policy for Elite Programs. This specifically outlines what constitutes improper use.
- 1.4 The Supplement industry
 - 1.4.1 NA strongly recommends that all Participants and Netball Organisations avoid engaging with network marketing Supplement distributors. Under no circumstances may a Participant become a distributor or sell Supplements.
 - 1.4.2 Such conduct is considered a serious conflict of interest and is therefore a breach of this Policy.

2. Classification and use of Supplements

- 2.1 This Policy is aligned with the AIS Sports Supplement Framework whereby Supplements are classified into four groups according to their effectiveness, safety and current status on WADA's List of Prohibited Substances and Methods.
- 2.2 Consideration of the use of supplements should be done in conjunction with the Team Doctor or Team Dietitian.
- 2.3 This Policy does not permit Injections as part of any Supplement strategy. Injections must only be administered in the event of a documented medically diagnosed illness or injury and should only be administered by a medical practitioner in accordance with the Sports Medicine Policy.

GROUP A SUPPLEMENTS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • These are Supplements that are supported for use in specific situations in sport, using evidence-based protocols. • This group of Supplements includes sports foods or beverages, medical supplements and performance products. • This group also includes Protein Fortified Foods manufactured under the FSANZ Food Standards code in Australia and using Australian/New Zealand sourced supplemental protein.
GROUP B SUPPLEMENTS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Group B Supplements include products that have preliminary support or interest and merit further research attention or monitored use.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Subject to this Policy, these Supplements could be considered for use by Athletes under a research protocol or case-managed clinical monitoring situation.
GROUP C SUPPLEMENTS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Group C Supplements include all Supplements that are not listed in Groups A, B or D. • These Supplements have no scientific evidence supportive of benefit amongst athletes or no research undertaken to guide an informed opinion. • Group C Supplements should not be provided to Athletes, but may be permitted for individualised use by an Athlete where there is appropriate approval from, or reporting to, the NA Supplement Panel.
GROUP D SUPPLEMENTS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Group D Supplements include stimulants, prohormones and hormone boosters, Growth Hormone releasers and ‘peptides’. • These Supplements either contain prohibited substances or have a high risk of contamination with prohibited substances, so their use could lead to an anti-doping rule violation. The WADA Prohibited Substance List is updated on an annual basis by WADA.

3. Use of Supplements in Pathway Athletes

- 3.1 NA believes that a food-first approach to nutrition for adolescents will better meet their sports nutrition needs by establishing improved foundation-nutrition and development outcomes. This can include the use of Protein Fortified Foods.
- 3.2 Provision of sports foods and medical supplements should only be made to underage athlete (under 18 years of age) and Pathway Athletes by their medical practitioner or an accredited sports dietitian if ‘real food’ options cannot be used to meet their specific nutrient or energy needs at specific times. Any underage athlete or Pathway Athlete that has received advice from a medical practitioner or an accredited sports dietitian to take any Supplement, should record this on the AMS, with an alert to the NA Supplement Panel for consideration. A copy of this Policy should be provided to the medical practitioner or the accredited sports dietitian at the time of consultation.
- 3.3 Underage Athletes must only be offered use of sports foods and medical supplements in accordance with section 3.2 of the Policy if:
 - 3.3.1 they have shown diligence in following a nutritious meal plan (meals, snacks and fluids) suitable for development, performance and health; and/or
 - 3.3.2 specific supplementation is necessary to treat a medically diagnosed nutrient deficiency.
- 3.4 In all other circumstances, provision of performance Supplements to underage Athletes is prohibited.
- 3.5 All Pathway Athletes must sign a Participation Agreement prior to participating in any NA pathway development program or pathway championships, and complete the Supplement Declaration on the AMS in accordance with section 4.5 below.

4. Athlete responsibilities

- 4.1 Subject to this Policy, Athletes:
 - 4.1.1 can use Group A and B Supplements with advice from the Team Doctor and/or Team Dietitian;
 - 4.1.2 can use Category C Supplements with the permission from the NA Supplements Panel before use;
 - 4.1.3 are *prohibited* from using Group D Supplements.
- 4.2 Where an Athlete is granted permission to use a Supplement by a Team Doctor and/or Team Dietitian, the athlete must record the Supplement on the AMS prior to use. The Team Doctor and/or Team Dietitian must also record the Supplement in the Athlete's clinical notes in the AMS.
- 4.3 All supplements should have third party Batch Testing, unless they have a TGA "R" listing or are reviewed and approved by the NA Supplement Panel.
- 4.4 Extreme caution must be exercised when purchasing Supplements both within and outside of Australia (including internet purchases). All international products MUST be third party Batch Tested and approved by the NA Supplement Panel prior to use.
- 4.5 All Athletes must complete the Supplement Declaration Form on AMS:
 - 4.5.1 for Australian Representative Squad Athletes: prior to the commencement of each SSN Regular Season and prior to all Australian Representative Squad activities;
 - 4.5.2 for all other SSN Athletes (including international SSN Athletes): prior to the commencement of each SSN Regular Season;
 - 4.5.3 for Pathway Athletes: prior to the commencement of the Activities.

5. Communication & consultation

- 5.1 Australian Representative Squad Athletes should consult the CMO, Team Doctor and/or the Team Dietitian prior to use of any Supplements.
- 5.2 All other Athletes (engaged by a Netball Organisation) should consult their Team Doctor and/or the Team Dietitian prior to use of any Supplements.
- 5.3 The use of a Supplement must be consistent with the overall training and Nutrition Performance Plan and only used in conjunction with a Nutrition Performance Plan based on a food first principle.
- 5.4 Notwithstanding the above, Athletes are responsible for any prohibited substance, its metabolite or marker found in their system which may constitute an anti-doping rule violation.

6. Record keeping

- 6.1 It is the Athlete's responsibility to record their use on the Supplement register within AMS. The following details must be maintained on the register:
 - 6.1.1 Supplement use, including product, brand and frequency/dosage must be recorded as a once-off entry. Athletes then only need to record changes in Supplement use – e.g. commencement date, dosage change, brand change or cessation of Supplement(s).
- 6.2 It is the responsibility of the Athlete to update and maintain the relevant Supplement register with any and all changes to Supplement use, however minor.
- 6.3 The Team Doctor and/or Team Dietitian must also record the Supplement (including product, brand and frequency/dosage must be recorded as a once-off entry) in the Athlete's clinical notes in the AMS.

Note: Notwithstanding clause 9.3, Supplement use and records may be randomly audited by the NA Dietitian and/or CMO at any time.

7. Netball Organisation responsibilities

- 7.1 Netball Organisations must:
 - 7.1.1 provide a list of Supplements to be used by the Netball Organisation annually by completing the Supplements Register (as provided by NA) within one month of the commencement of the SSN pre-season (for SSN Clubs) to be approved by the NA Supplements Panel. In the event that a Supplement is added to the list, the Netball Organisation must notify NA prior to its use;
 - 7.1.2 maintain register of authorised individuals who have access to the SSN Club distributed Supplements and can distribute Supplements (in the absence of the Team Doctor or Team Dietitian), a copy of the register to be provided to NA as updated from time to time;
 - 7.1.3 maintain AMS records of Netball Organisation distributed Supplements through the Team Doctor and/or Team Dietitian;
 - 7.1.4 distribute fact sheets and other information to support this Policy;
 - 7.1.5 procure that all Participants attend all education sessions as required by NA; and
 - 7.1.6 immediately upon becoming aware of any breach of this Policy, notify the CMO and NA Dietitian.

8. Storage & security

- 8.1 Any Supplements kept within NA's facilities, or those of an SSN Club (including in team kit bags) must be stored in a secure location.
- 8.2 Access to those Supplements must be restricted to authorised individuals as recorded by the Netball Organisation. Records of Supplements use and access must be stored in a secure location and must be maintained.

9. Confidentiality & privacy

- 9.1 Anyone who acquires information under this Policy must not disclose this information to any person unless this Policy expressly authorises the disclosure.
- 9.2 If a Participant discloses to the public any circumstances relating to a breach of this Policy, NA and/or the Netball Organisation will be entitled to receive information regarding that breach. In the case of such disclosure by a Participant, the obligations of confidentiality imposed pursuant to this section 9 shall no longer apply.
- 9.3 An annual (de-identified) report/audit of Supplement use by Athletes will be conducted by the CMO and may be provided to the NA Board.

10. Sponsorships with Supplements companies

- 10.1 NA, Netball Organisations and Participants must obtain the approval of the NA Supplement Panel prior to the finalisation of any sponsorship, commercial arrangement, contra arrangement or endorsement agreement that relates to or involves the supply (contra or otherwise) or promotion of sports foods or Supplements or their manufacturers or distributors (the *Proposed Sponsorship Arrangement*).
- 10.2 All approval requests must be submitted to the NA General Manager – Legal & Integrity, detailing the:
 - 10.2.1 name and details of the company;
 - 10.2.2 term of the arrangement/agreement;
 - 10.2.3 value of the arrangement;
 - 10.2.4 designations;
 - 10.2.5 assets/promotional activities; and
 - 10.2.6 contra provided (if any). Any contra provided must not contravene this Policy.
- 10.3 When considering the approval request, the NA Supplement Panel may (amongst any other relevant considerations) impose any terms or conditions deemed necessary in order to allow the arrangement/agreement to proceed.
- 10.4 The NA Supplement Panel must respond to any approval requests within a timely manner, without unnecessary delay.

11. NA Supplements Panel

- 11.1 The NA Dietitian shall convene the NA Supplement Panel as required under this Policy. The NA Supplement Panel shall comprise of the NA Dietitian, CMO, NA General Manager – Legal & Integrity and any other appointee as determined necessary by the NA Supplement Panel from time to time.
- 11.2 The NA Supplement Panel shall:
 - 11.2.1 ensure this Policy and practices remain ethical, compliant with the World Anti-Doping Code and the AIS Sports Supplement Framework;

- 11.2.2 report annually to the NA Board on the use of Supplements across Athletes, review this Policy and outline any proposed amendments to the Policy;
- 11.2.3 consider approval requests for Supplement sponsorships and agreements;
- 11.2.4 identify or develop, then distribute and deliver appropriate education material to Participants;
- 11.2.5 be responsible for making this Policy (and any updates from time to time) available to all Participants who are bound by this Policy;
- 11.2.6 act in a professional, discreet and confidential manner in undertaking the obligations of their role under this Policy;
- 11.2.7 have responsibility for decisions made on behalf of NA in relation to this Policy, unless another person or body is explicitly specified within this Policy as having that responsibility; and
- 11.2.8 ensure they fully understand their role and obligations under this Policy and have a current and accurate understanding of matters relevant to this Policy.

12. Education

- 12.1 NA, in conjunction with the Netball Organisations will ensure Participants receive, attend and/or undertake appropriate education programs in relation to this Policy on an annual basis. This may involve a face to face/online presentation and/or online modules as determined by NA in its discretion.

13. Investigations

- 13.1 The NA General Manager – Legal & Integrity may, at their sole discretion or on the request of the NA Supplement Panel or NA CEO, commence an investigation, and may appoint an investigation official to determine if a breach has been committed by a Participant or Netball Organisation (an *Investigation*).
- 13.2 Participants agree to honestly answer all questions in connection with such Investigations, other than in circumstances where such an answer would render the individual liable to prosecution for an indictable offence in Australia. Any individual participating in the investigation will be entitled to appoint one representative and one support person, including Australian Netball Players Association (ANPA), to be present when all such questioning takes place.

14. Sanctions & breaches

- 14.1 **WARNING – strict liability**: the National Anti-Doping Policy follows the World Anti-Doping Code by applying a strict liability approach when it comes to the use of any prohibited substance, even if it is contained in a Supplement and is not disclosed in the list of ingredients. The Athlete is solely responsible for any prohibited substance used, attempted to use, or that is found in that person's system, regardless of how it got there and whether there was an intention to cheat or not.

- 14.2 A significant number of positive tests have been attributed to the use of Supplements. Taking an inaccurately labelled Supplement or a Supplement that has been contaminated or adulterated is not an adequate defence in an anti-doping hearing.
- 14.3 All Supplements used by an Athlete should have third party Batch Testing unless they have a TGA “R” listing or are reviewed and approved by the NA Supplement Panel.
- 14.4 Where the use of a Supplement triggers a possible anti-doping rule violation, this matter will be dealt with under the National Anti-Doping Policy or the World Netball Anti-Doping Policy (as applicable, depending on the Participant). If the matter does not result in an anti-doping rule violation, NA may then review the matter to determine if there was a breach of this Policy, Code of Conduct or other policy.
- 14.5 Breaches
- 14.5.1 A Participant commits a breach of this Policy when any of the following occurs:
- 14.5.1.1 an Athlete fails to record their Supplement use on the AMS before use;
 - 14.5.1.2 an Athlete fails to complete, or provides a false, Supplement Declaration Form;
 - 14.5.1.3 a Participant or a Netball Organisation fails to obtain the prior written approval of the NA Supplement Panel before entering into an arrangement regarding Supplement endorsement or use;
 - 14.5.1.4 a Participant other than Team Doctor or Team Dietitian provides or supplies a Supplement to an Athlete without authority from the Team Doctor or Team Dietitian;
 - 14.5.1.5 an Athlete uses a Supplement that is not approved by the NA Supplement Panel (where required under this Policy);
 - 14.5.1.6 a Participant refuses or unreasonably fails to comply with a reasonable direction of NA made under this Policy;
 - 14.5.1.7 a Netball Organisation fails to comply with any of the provisions in section 7 of this Policy; and
 - 14.5.1.8 a Participant does or fails to do anything that is reasonably deemed by the NA Supplement Panel to be a breach of this Policy.
- 14.5.2 All breaches (including suspected breaches), must be reported to the CMO and NA Dietitian immediately upon becoming aware of the breach. Any breach of section 14.5.1 must be recorded on the AMS and notified to the CMO and NA Dietitian immediately.
- 14.6 Sanctions
- 14.6.1 Any Participant who is found to have breached this Policy may face disciplinary action in accordance with the NA Tribunal Rules.

- 14.6.2 The following sanctions may be imposed:
- 14.6.2.1 a warning (generally accompanied by the completion of education);
 - 14.6.2.2 suspension from competition for a specified period;
 - 14.6.2.3 suspension from access to Athletes and/or Netball Organisation for a specified period;
 - 14.6.2.4 Ban from participation in NA and/or Netball Organisation competitions, training or events (including selection in representative teams);
 - 14.6.2.5 subject to provisions of the *Fair Work Act 2009* (Cth) suspension or termination of contract or financial support; and/or
 - 14.6.2.6 any other sanction as determined in accordance with the NA Tribunal Rules.
- 14.6.3 Any breach by an SSN Club will be dealt with under the SSN Competition & Compliance Rules.
- 14.6.4 Any MO that is found to have breached this Policy in respect of an Elite Program other than the SSN competition may have conditions imposed, at the discretion of the NA General Manager – Legal & Integrity and CMO, to:
- 14.6.4.1 address and rectify the breach(es);
 - 14.6.4.2 ensure ongoing compliance with this Policy; and
 - 14.6.4.3 ensure that any legal or contractual obligations of the MO are fulfilled appropriately and in a timely manner.
- 14.7 In the event a MO fails to comply with any conditions imposed in accordance with clause 14.6.4 above, the NA General Manager – Legal & Integrity will escalate the non-compliance for consideration and further action (as deemed appropriate) by the NA Board.

END

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