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## **INTRA-ARTICULAR INJECTION AND CORTICOSTEROID ADMINISTRATION ADVISORY**

At its December 13, 2019 Board Meeting the ARCI Board of Directors, upon the recommendation of the RMTC, approved a Model Rule for horses engaged in flat and jumps racing that:

- 1) **Establishes a mandatory 14-day stand-down period following an intra-articular injection, and**
- 2) **Prohibits stacking of corticosteroids** (the presence of more than one corticosteroid in a horse's post-race sample).

To assist veterinarians and horsemen with compliance, the RMTC advises the following:

1. The European Horseracing Scientific Liaison's Detection Times for systemically administered (IV, PO) corticosteroids are:

Dexamethasone: 120 hours (5 days)  
Prednisolone: 48 hours

More information on Detection Times is available at:

[https://www.ehslc.com/images/uploads/documents/EHSLC\\_DETECTION\\_TIMES\\_\(updated\\_June\\_2019\).pdf](https://www.ehslc.com/images/uploads/documents/EHSLC_DETECTION_TIMES_(updated_June_2019).pdf)

Note that Detection Times relate to a specific dose and route of administration. The use of alternative doses, routes of administration, and dosing frequency can affect Detection Times. In all cases, the withdrawal interval used by the veterinarian should be longer than the Detection Time which represents the first time after a treatment that the medication was not detected in samples from the treated horses. The Detection Time does not have a 'built in' margin of safety for variations that may exist between individual horses.

2. Intramuscular injection will increase corticosteroid detection time by weeks and potentially months. To the extent that intramuscular injection of a corticosteroid is medically warranted, it is advisable to perform clearance testing before entry of the treated horse.
3. The 14-day stand down period will be a sufficient\* withdrawal interval for intra-articular injection of betamethasone, isoflupredone, and triamcinolone in a single joint at a dose of:

Betamethasone: 9 mg  
Isoflupredone: 20 mg  
Triamcinolone: 9 mg

4. Intra-articular injection of methylprednisolone requires a longer withdrawal interval than the 14-day stand down period. It is advisable to perform clearance testing of blood and urine before entry for horses having received methylprednisolone injections.

\*For all corticosteroids dose, joint(s) treated, and injection technique can impact Detection Time and should be considered in determining a withdrawal interval from treatment to race. Clearance testing is advisable for injections in the lower hock or stifle joints due to the risk of subcutaneous deposit of medication (hocks) or deposition of medication into a fat pad (stifles), either of which can delay medication clearance.