

PROCAINE IN NSW GREYHOUND RACING

GRNSW has approved the introduction of a reporting level for the prohibited substance Procaine in greyhound urine samples. This means that Procaine found in a racing greyhound would only be deemed to be a prohibited substance at a concentration in **excess of 1000 nanograms per millilitre** in urine.

Whilst the presence of Procaine is currently treated as a breach of the rules, under the revised approach, samples found to contain Procaine at a **level less** than the designated reporting level will be treated as exempt from the provisions of the rules.

Under this approach, greyhounds presented for racing in NSW who record a level of Procaine in excess of the reporting level will be subject to a breach of the prohibited substance rules.

PROCAINE IN FEED MEAT

The most likely source of Procaine in a positive greyhound swab is from the greyhound being fed meat from an animal that has been treated with Procaine Penicillin.

Things to know about Procaine:

- Procaine Penicillin is an antibiotic readily available to farmers to treat sick animals;
- Procaine is mixed with Penicillin to decrease pain and increase the duration of action of the Penicillin;
- In New South Wales farmers do not need a prescription to obtain Procaine Penicillin from a chemist;
- If the farmer has a sick animal he may use this drug (possibly at above recommended dose rates) in an effort to save the animal; and
- If the animal does not respond it may be sold to a knackery or direct to a greyhound trainer.

If the above meat is fed to racing greyhounds it could result in detection of Procaine in a urine sample.

HOW TO MINIMISE THE RISK OF A POSITIVE SWAB

1. Choice of meat animal

Kangaroo is least likely to contain drugs while meat from horses and dairy cattle is more likely to, with beef cattle in between these two groups.

2. Choice of meat supplier

Purchase meat from a trusted supplier, one who sells a greyhound line of products where all attempts have been made to minimise the risk. If you buy from a large supplier their batch of mince can be made from several animals, if one animal contains Procaine the drug is diluted in the meat from the other animals and decreases the chances of your greyhound eating enough Procaine to result in a positive swab.

3. Type of meat

The liver and kidneys are responsible for breaking down and excreting drugs. This results in high levels of drugs being found in these organs.

The feeding of liver and kidney from knackery animals could be very risky.

In Great Britain the rules state "Offal which is not fit for human consumption shall not be fed to greyhounds in training." There is no such law in Australia.

Things to consider when purchasing meat:

- Twice minced meat from a large supplier comes from many animals and therefore any drug is diluted throughout the whole batch of mince;
- If you purchase cubed meat or whole joints of meat there is a chance you are buying meat from the area where the drug was injected and your dog could eat large amounts of the drug in one meal resulting in a positive swab;
- If you mince your own meat try to mix meat from different areas of the animal and from different animals and mince it in large

batches mixing it well to dilute any possible contamination; and

- If you purchase butts or forequarters look for bruising that may indicate an injection site and do not use meat from this area to feed racing animals.

If you slaughter your own meat sourced from local aged lame or “downer” animals look for bruising and do not use this meat for racing greyhounds. Be very careful with meat from performance horses and dairy cows. Mix meat from different sections of the animal and from different animals if possible. Make large batches of mince and double mince them to ensure a good mixing of the meat to dilute any contamination that may be in the meat.

IMPORTANT

If you slaughter your own animals from local farmers you must try and find out what they were treated with, where they were injected and how long ago.

When skinning the animal look for bruising at injection sites and **do not use doubtful meat in racing greyhounds**, use it in rearing or retired animals.

4. Time of feeding

The longer the time between a greyhound eating contaminated meat and then being swabbed the less chance there is of the drug being detected.

It should be noted that the Great Britain Greyhound Board bans the feeding of knackery meat within 24 hours of a race or trial and the Greyhound Regulatory Board strongly recommends that no knackery meat be fed to a greyhound within 48 hours of a race or trial.

Studies have shown that Procaine Penicillin can withstand cooking conditions and significant levels of the drug can remain.

Freezing, while gradually destroying the Penicillin part of the drug would not be likely to have an effect on the Procaine component.

OTHER PROCAINE SOURCES

Most veterinarians are aware NOT to use Procaine Penicillin in the treatment of infections in racing greyhounds. If administered direct to the animal (subject to dosage levels) the reporting level could exceed GRNSW levels for an extended period i.e. the withholding period in beef cattle for human consumption is 28 days.

NSW RULES OF RACING

Prohibited substances;

LR 1 A (c) (ii) Procaine when detected in samples taken from greyhounds at a concentration in excess of 1000 nanograms per millilitre in urine

Exempted substances;

LR 1C The prohibited substance procaine is an exempted substance when detected in samples taken from greyhounds at a concentration equal to or less than 1000 nanograms per millilitre in urine

R83 Greyhound to be free of prohibited substances

(1) A person who-

(a) administers, attempts to administer or causes to be administered a prohibited substance to a greyhound;

(b) aids or abets any person to administer a prohibited substance to a greyhound; or

(c) has prior knowledge of a prohibited substance being administered to a greyhound for the purpose of preventing it from starting in an Event, affecting its condition, behaviour or performance in any Event or when subject to any other contingency provided for pursuant to these Rules, **shall be guilty of an offence. offence.**