

DRUGS BANNED IN SLAUGHTER HORSES

INTRODUCTION

U.S. horses are given a steady diet of drugs throughout their lives barring their meat from entering the human food chain.

Certain drugs barred from use for slaughter horses have a zero withdrawal period; others a six month withdrawal period.

It is challenging to imagine a scenario where a horse intended for slaughter for human consumption who has been given any of the prohibited drugs on the six month list is withheld from slaughter for the minimum time period. It is simply not the nature of the business.

BUTE

The most common drug administered to the U.S. horse is Phenylbutazone, or "Bute". Bute is banned for use in all food animals.

It is estimated that at least 85% of all U.S. horses are treated with Bute. However, it is difficult to imagine any U.S. horse who has never been treated with Bute at one time for another.

Bute comes in the form of tablets, liquid, gel, paste and powder. A horse treated with Bute is barred from slaughter.

NO WITHDRAWAL PERIOD

Phenylbutazone
Chloramphenicol
Clenbuterol (Ventipulmin)
Diethylstilbestrol (DES)
Dimetridazole
Iprnidazole and other nitroimidazoles (including metronidazole)
Furazolidone, Nitrofurazone, other nitrofurans
Sulfonamides
Dipyrrone
Dapsone (4-[(4-aminobenzene)sulfonyl]aniline)
Glycopeptides (antibiotics such as vancomycin)
Fluoroquinolones
Gentian violet (Tris(4-(dimethylamino)phenyl)methyl) methylum chloride)
Aristolochic acid (8-methoxy-6-nitrophenanthro[3,4-d][1,3]dioxole-5-carboxylic acid) and

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preparations thereof

Chloroform

Chlorpromazine

Colchicine

Hormonal steroids for growth promotion purposes (testosterone, progesterone, trenbolone and derivatives)

Anabolic or gestagenic steroids for therapeutic and/or zootechnical purposes (boldenone and estrogens such as 17 β estradiol, estriol, and other sex hormones).

All β -agonists (e.g. compounds belonging to the Clenbuterol family)

Stilbenes ((E)-1,2-Diphenylethene and isomers), salts and esters.

Thyrostats (Thyroid hormones, derivatives like Levothyroxine and their agonist such as thiouracils and sulfur-containing imidazoles)

SIX MONTH WITHDRAWAL PERIOD

Altrenogest (gestagenic agent, MRLs set to 1 μ g/kg in fat and 0.9 μ g/kg in liver)

Carprofen (NSAID with uses similar to phenylbutazone but less potent; MRLs set to 500 μ g/kg in muscle, 1,000 μ g/kg in fat, liver and kidney)

Cefquinome (antibiotic; MRLs set to 100 μ g/kg in liver and 200 μ g/kg in kidney)

Ceftiofur (antibiotic; MRLs set to 1,000 μ g/kg in muscle, 2,000 μ g/kg in fat and liver and 6,000 μ g/kg in kidney)

Dexamethasone (corticosteroid; MRLs set to 0,75 μ g/kg in muscle, 2 μ g/kg in liver and 0.75 μ g/kg in kidney)

Febantel, Fenbendazole and oxfendazole sulphone (antiparasitic agent; MRLs set to 50 μ g/kg in muscle, fat and kidney and 500 μ g/kg in liver)

Firocoxib (NSAID; MRLs set to 10 μ g/kg in muscle and kidney, 15 μ g/kg in fat and 60 μ g/kg in liver).

Flunixin (NSAID; MRLs set to 10 μ g/kg in muscle, 20 μ g/kg in fat, 100 μ g/kg in liver and 200 μ g/kg in kidney)

Isoxsuprine

Ivermectin (antiparasitic agent; MRLs set to 100 μ g/kg in fat and liver and 30 μ g/kg in kidney)

Kanamycin (antibiotic; MRLs set to 100 μ g/kg in muscle and fat, 600 μ g/kg in liver and 2,500 μ g/kg in kidney)

Mebendazole (antiparasitic agent; MRLs set to 60 μ g/kg in muscle, fat and kidney and 400 μ g/kg in liver)

Meloxicam (NSAID; MRLs set to 20 μ g/kg in muscle and 65 μ g/kg in liver and kidney)

Metamizole (NSAID; MRLs set to 100 μ g/kg in all relevant tissues)

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Moxidectin (antiparasitic agent; MRLs set to 50 µg/kg in muscle, and kidney , 500 µg/kg in fat and 100 µg/kg in liver)

Neomycin (antibiotic; MRLs set to 500 µg/kg in muscle, fat and liver and 5,000 µg/kg in kidney)

Trimethoprim (anti-infectious and chemotherapy agent; MRLs set to 100 µg/kg in all relevant tissues)

Vedaprofen (NSAID; MRLs set to 50 µg/kg in muscle, 20 µg/kg in fat, 100 µg/kg in liver and 1,000 µg/kg in kidney)

Although Bute is the most commonly given drug, all the drugs listed above are routinely given to horses in a daily basis throughout the United States, especially those involved in racing.

However, not only are medicines administered to U.S. equines, but compounds not catalogued *per se* as “medicines” are also frequently given to U.S. horses, such as dimethyl sulfoxide (an lab grade polar aprotic solvent used as a liniment on horses to treat sore legs), protein supplements and, much like beef cattle, bone meal, which is a known vector for BSE or “mad cow” disease.

Bearing in mind the negative effects on human health it is understandable why authorities both in the U.S. and abroad prohibit animals treated with such drugs from entering the human food chain.

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See [Section 530.41](#) of Title 21 of US Code of Federal Regulations, provisions of the Federal Food, Drugs and Cosmetics Act (21 U.S.C. §301 et seq.);

See *also* [provisions](#) of European Commission (EU) Regulation No. 37/2010 and European Council Directive 96/22/EC several medicines commonly used in horse husbandry in the U.S. have been totally banned from use in animals (regardless of species) intended to be slaughtered for human food.