



Notification of the use of Bisphosphonates on Racehorses

The International Federation of Horseracing Authorities (IFHA) has advised that from 1 January 2027, the International Agreement on Breeding, Racing and Wagering (IABRW) will contain a total ban on the use of bisphosphonates. New Zealand Thoroughbred Racing (NZTR) is a member of the IFHA and a signatory to the IABRW and, as such, intends to incorporate the ban on the use of bisphosphonates into the Rules of Racing.

The ban on the use of bisphosphonates arises from significant welfare concerns associated with the use of bisphosphonates, particularly on bone adaption and remodelling in growing and exercising horses. Because bisphosphonates bind to bone mineral, they can have a prolonged and variable detection time.

For this reason and in accordance with rule 804(12)(g), NZTR and the Racing Integrity Board (RIB) must be advised of any administration of a bisphosphonate which took place, or which takes place prior to 1 January 2027. This will help NZTR and the RIB to understand the extent of the use of bisphosphonates and will provide a record of all treated horses prior to the introduction of the total ban. If a horse under your care has been given a bisphosphonate, or is given a bisphosphonate before 1 January 2027, please use the appropriate form to advise NZTR and the RIB. A simple online declaration form has been developed to record Bisphosphonate administration. The form can be found here:

[Bisphosphonate Administration Submission Form](#)

The ban will apply to any horse which is racing, or which may participate in racing in the future. The ban will not apply to horses which have retired from racing and will not race again or horses which will never race.

The current Rules of Racing prohibit any use of bisphosphonates on horses under the age of 4-years, while horses over the age of 4-years which have been given bisphosphonate must not race for 30 clear days. The Rules of Racing allow the use of radiolabelled bisphosphonate for diagnostic nuclear imaging.

Buyers of horses are advised to ascertain whether the horse/s for prospective purchase have been administered any bisphosphonates. A horse which has been administered a bisphosphonate prior to the total ban being put in place will be subject to the current Rules of Racing, so buyers of horses should ensure that they obtain their veterinary records to verify any administration details.

The RIB also offers an elective testing service for trainers who have concerns about previous bisphosphonate administration, particularly where a horse has recently been purchased or transferred from another stable.

This service provides an opportunity for trainers to undertake targeted testing to help identify potential compliance risks before presenting a horse to race. Testing is available at the trainer's cost and requires prior approval from the RIB Veterinary Services Manager.

Due to the prolonged persistence of bisphosphonates in bone and variable excretion patterns, a negative test result does not guarantee that a horse is free of bisphosphonates or eligible to race.

Definition: Bisphosphonate means any analogue of inorganic pyrophosphate which inhibits bone resorption. These include, but are not limited to, Tiludronate (Tildren) and Clodronate (Osphos).

Please contact the RIB Veterinary Services Manager; Dr Michelle Pap, if you need any further information or to request elective testing: vet@rib.org.nz, ph: +64272850951.