

Team Sky Urges Ban On Tramadol

Team Sky have called for the opioid Tramadol to be added to the banned list of the World Anti-Doping Agency in response to comments made by Michael Barry, a former teammate of [Lance Armstrong](#).

Barry, who rode for Team Sky until his retirement in 2012, recently disclosed that he made use of a legal and powerful drug while racing for the British team. [Tramadol](#) has potentially addictive side effects and is classified as a narcotic-like pain reliever that is used by athletes and others to treat moderate to severe pain. This drug can result in nausea, indigestion, vomiting, drowsiness, headache, dry mouth, abdominal pain, and vertigo. Indiscriminate use of this drug can lead to tachycardia, postural hypotension, palpitation, gastrointestinal irritation, or cardiovascular collapse.

Team Sky called for Tramadol to be outlawed so that use of this drug can be regulated using therapeutic use exemption certificates. A spokesperson for Team Sky, which won the past two Tours de France through Sir Bradley Wiggins and [Chris Froome](#), said none of our riders should ride whilst using Tramadol – that's the policy of this team and added that Team Sky do not give it to riders whilst racing or training, either as a pre-emptive measure or to manage existing pain. The spokesperson added we believe that its side-effects, such as dizziness and drowsiness, could cause issues for the safety of all riders and added we also feel that if a rider has the level of severe pain for its appropriate use, they should not be riding. The spokesperson for Team Sky also remarked that Tramadol is not prohibited by WADA, but this has been our firm position for the last two seasons and all medical staff and riders are aware of this and said our view is that it should be on the WADA list and any appropriate clinical use could be managed through the regulated Therapeutic Use Exemptions.

Tramadol was used by Michael Barry for treating legitimate complaints. Barry remarked he had nagging injuries throughout his career and he used Tramadol when he was injured and racing injured, but he also realized the side effects. The former cyclist said it was a lot stronger than he thought and is potentially addictive.

Sir Dave Brailsford, the Team Sky principal, remarked the no-Tramadol policy of this team was reiterated at the team's training camp last November. Brailsford said it is similar to someone having their first joint and then moving on to ecstasy or whatever and added then the next thing you know everyone is on crack cocaine.

Tramadol was included on the 2014 "monitoring program" for "possible in-competition abuse" by WADA and the anti-doping agency remarked the World Anti-Doping code stipulates that a substance or method can be considered for inclusion on the WADA prohibited list (which is reviewed every year) if it is determined that it meets two of the following three criteria: it has the potential to enhance sport performance, it represents a health risk to the athletes, and it violates the spirit of sport.