

French TV Micro-Dosing Doping Experiment Slammed By WADA

French television channel Stade 2 has been slammed by the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) for its experiment into micro-dosing and avoiding detection from the [Athlete Biological Passport](#) (ABP). In this experiment, the organization described participants as “human guinea pigs.”

WADA claimed that French reports that a method called 'micro-doping' can beat anti-doping screenings are false. The results of this report were not scientifically proven, says WADA. It added it is first important in commenting on any study that the findings are properly peer reviewed and published.

Eight amateur athletes were recruited by Stade 2 and small doses of Erythropoietin (EPO) after undergoing a VO2 max test, which is a time trial on a static bike and 3km run. The recruited athletes were then tested again after the month of doping. It was found that average improvement in VO2 max among the athletes was at 6.1 per cent. The report also tried to demonstrate that none of the athletes would have been detected by the Athlete Biological Passport. It was also demonstrated by the program that the athletes would not have tripped any alarms in the bio-passport system thus implying that this doping method could be used by top professionals to surreptitiously enhance performance.

This study was carried out by Pierre Sallet of the Athletes for Transparency organization and demonstrated how the UCI Biological Passport can be circumvented by use of [Human Growth Hormone](#), blood transfusions, EPO, and corticosteroids.

The report is believed to be allegedly conducted with the ‘blessing’ of the World Anti-Doping Agency but WADA has denied this despite making the Athlete Biological Passport software available for the report to use. In a statement, WADA director general David Howman said the study does not accurately follow the Athlete Biological Passport guidelines, and therefore its relevance to the ABP is not entirely clear. Howman added WADA is aware of the television report that aired on France Televisions and added that we would like to clarify that while we did make the Athlete Biological Passport (ABP) software available, we certainly did not “bless” or endorse the study, as has been suggested.

The WADA director general also added that the study does not accurately follow the Athlete Biological Passport guidelines, and therefore its relevance to the ABP is not entirely clear. Howman also commented that WADA does not ever recommend athletes take part as ‘human guinea pigs’ in a study in which they would be subjected to taking [performance enhancing drugs](#). The World Anti-Doping Agency also warned athletes not to take part in such studies in which they would be subjected to the use of performance enhancing drugs. A WADA statement

reads we welcome and encourage research relevant to the Athlete Biological Passport, and continue to work with experts to advance and enhance the project.

In 2011, a study published in *The European Journal of Applied Physiology* revealed similar findings to those being reported in the French TV experiment. This study showed a 10 percent increase in total hemoglobin mass among 10 subjects and it also demonstrated that an anti-doping test, which was performed afterward using the biological passport parameters, did not flag any of the samples of the subjects as suspicious.