

Pseudoephedrine no boost to performance

June 30 2009

(PhysOrg.com) -- Many top-level cyclists may be putting their health at risk for no competitive gain by taking pseudoephedrine, according to new research.

Dr Toby Mündel and Dr Steve Stannard, from the Institute of Food, Nutrition and Human Health detail the research in a paper soon to be published in the *European Journal of Sport Science*.

The researchers tested eight well-trained cyclists who performed two time trials in the laboratory. Ninety minutes before each trial they were given either a placebo or approximately three times the usually prescribed dose of pseudoephedrine.

“Our results showed that pseudoephedrine did not have a noticeable effect on the cyclists' performance,” says Dr Mündel.

Pseudoephedrine, commonly used in cold medicines but also to make the illegal drug [methamphetamine](#) or P, was taken off the banned substance list by the World Anti-Doping Agency five years ago.

New Zealand is now considering a total ban, after Prime Minister John Key asked advisers to look into whether pseudoephedrine could be removed from cold and flu remedies without rendering those drugs ineffective.

Dr Mündel says some of those participating in the research had unpleasant side effects. “One vomited once he had completed the test

and said he had muscle cramps and felt decidedly hotter. Others also commented that they suffered slight nausea."

Dr Mündel says the research shows there may be some risk. "If riders are already pushing themselves hard, taking pseudoephedrine could increase their heart rate further.

"The reason we decided to look at it in the sporting arena is the same reason the government is looking at banning, it, because it can be abused. Our research seems to suggest the risks outweigh the benefits."

Provided by Massey University ([news](#) : [web](#))

Citation: Pseudoephedrine no boost to performance (2009, June 30) retrieved 2 May 2024 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2009-06-pseudoephedrine-boost.html>

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