

**MOST IMMEDIATE**

F. No. 14-102/2012-SP-IV  
Government of India  
Ministry of Youth Affairs & Sports  
Department of Sports

Shastri Bhavan, New Delhi  
Dated 19<sup>th</sup> March, 2013

**OFFICE MEMORANDUM**

**Subject:- STANDARD OPERATIVE PROCEDURE (SOP) TO IDENTIFY CIRCUMSTANCES (FEMALE HYPERANDROGENISM) IN WHICH A PARTICULAR ATHLETE WILL NOT BE ELIGIBLE TO PARTICIPATE IN COMPETITIONS IN THE FEMALE CATEGORY**

The undersigned is directed to enclose STANDARD OPERATIVE PROCEDURE to identify circumstances (Female Hyperandrogenism) in which a particular athlete will not be eligible to participate in Competitions in the female category.

2. SAI and NSFs are required to carry out the following:-
  - (i) Appoint Nodal officers and alternate nodal officers as per para 2.1 of the said guidelines and display their name, designation, address and telephone numbers on their website. Further the said officers are required to take necessary action as per the enclosed document.
  - (ii) Give wide publicity to this document.
3. This SOP will be applicable from the date of issue of this letter.



(S.P.S. Tomar)  
Under Secretary to the Govt. of India

Encl: As above.

1. All State Governments and UTs
2. Director General Sports Authority of India
3. Director (Tech.) NIC for uploading on MYAS website under Dept. of Sports section.
4. All Recognized National Sports Federations as per list enclosed.

**STANDARD OPERATIVE PROCEDURE TO IDENTIFY CIRCUMSTANCES (FEMALE HYPERANDROGENISM) IN WHICH A PARTICULAR SPORTS PERSON WILL NOT BE ELIGIBLE TO PARTICIPATE IN COMPETITIONS IN THE FEMALE CATEGORY**

**1.0 Introduction :-**

1.1 In general, the performances of male and female Sports persons may differ mainly due to the fact that men produce significantly more androgenic hormones than women and, therefore, are under stronger influence of such hormones. Androgenic hormones have performance enhancing effects, particularly on strength, power and speed, which may provide a competitive advantage in sports. This is one of the reasons why the exogenous administration of such hormones and/or the promotion of the endogenous production of these hormones are banned under the World Anti-Doping Code.

1.2 Human biology allows forms of intermediate levels between the conventional categories of male and female, sometimes referred to as intersex. Intersex female Sports persons with elevated androgen production give rise to a particular concern in the context of competitive sports, which is referred to as "Female Hyperandrogenism."

1.3 This document is only to determine whether a Sports person is eligible to compete in the female category of any sports competition and does not deal with determination of gender of any person. This document should not be treated as one relating to gender tests. In the event a Sports person has been declared ineligible to compete in the female category, the Sports person may be eligible to compete as a male Sports person, if the Sports person qualifies for the male event of the sport.

**2.0 Procedure for initiation of medical investigation of a female Sports person to ascertain her eligibility for participation in the female category of any sports competition from Female Hyperandrogenism point of view:-**

2.1 Sports Authority of India (SAI) and National Sports Federations (NSFs) both will designate 1 female nodal officer and 1 female alternate nodal officer for dealing with the matter. There will be only 1 set of Nodal and alternate nodal officers of SAI and NSF each in the whole of India. The alternate nodal officer will act as nodal officer in case of absence of the nodal officer of the respective organization. It will be the responsibility of these officers to carry out the investigation process in most confidential manner and involving minimum number of people.

2.2 The medical examination of the Sports person may be carried out at any level of competition as per the general guidelines for determination of the ability of a competitor to participate in an event as a female Sports person. They are not meant for just Sports persons who compete in international events. It is emphasized, that this will not be a standard test, which is applied to every Sports person. Under no circumstances, should every female Sports person be subjected to such medical examination. It must be applied only when there is a reasonable doubt regarding Female Hyperandrogenism condition of a particular Sports person.





2.3 Medical Investigation of a female Sports person in this regard can be carried out only on the request of the following:-

- (i) Written request of the Sports person herself (a Sports person who is concerned about personal symptoms of Hyperandrogenism ). The Sports person is required to give a written request in person to any of the nodal officers stated in para 2.1 above stating her address and telephone number. The Sports person should also enclose copy of her photo identity card with the request.
- (ii) Written request of the Medical officer of Sports Authority of India (SAI) / concerned National Sports Federation who may have doubt about a Sports person having Female Hyperandrogenism on the basis of her periodic health examination. The request of the doctor will contain the basis of making the said request, report of the medical examination conducted by the said doctor, his / her name, address, telephone number, registration Number, stamp and signature. The doctor will clearly identify the Sports person in the request.
- (iii) A written complaint. The complaint is to be made by the complainant to any of the nodal officers stated in para 2.1 above in person. The request will contain the basis of making the said request and the name, address, telephone number and signature of the complainant. The complainant will clearly identify the Sports person in the request. The complainant is also required to submit a copy of his / her proof of address and his / her photo identity along with the complaint. The complainant is required to show the originals of the said identity documents to the nodal officer while making the request. The complainant is also required to show the originals of the documents on the basis of which the request is being made, if any, to the nodal officer while making the request.

2.4 Requests for a female hyperandrogenism investigation that do not satisfy the formal requirements set forth in paras 2.2 and 2.3 above, or which lack substance, shall be rejected by the nodal officer.

### 3.0 Details of medical examination and provisions for appeal :-

3.1 On scrutinizing the request as per para 2.3 above, in case the nodal officer decides to go ahead with the medical examination , she will take appointment ( date and time ) for the same from a female doctor of SAI / NSF to conduct the same. The nodal officer will then request the Sports person in writing to undergo the routine medical examination, which will be conducted by the said doctor accordingly. The nodal officer will also provide a copy of these guidelines to the Sports person along with the said letter so that she is aware of the procedure in this regard.

3.2 The said routine medical examination will be carried out by the said female doctor taking care of privacy of the Sports person and will include external genital examination of the Sports person. The said doctor may take assistance of only female nursing staff, if required. In majority of cases, the point in question regarding eligibility of the Sports person for participation in the female category will be resolved by the said routine medical examination. However, in the following cases where the genital



examination is ambiguous, certain other tests would be required. Cases of ambiguous genitalia examination include the following :-

- (i) Undescended testis (bilateral or unilateral)
- (ii) Hypospadias
- (iii) Clitoromegaly
- (iv) Inguinal Hernia in females (Unilateral or bilateral)
- (v) Single perineal opening
- (vi) Lack of pubic hair
- (vii) Absence of secondary sexual characteristic like breast development, pubic hair growth in girls >14 years of age.

3.3 In such cases (of ambiguous genitalia), the concerned individual Sports person should first be subjected to Measurement of Serum Testosterone level by the doctor as selected in para 3.1 above. All cases of serum testosterone determination must be done either at National Dope Testing Laboratory (NDTL) at CGO Complex, New Delhi or a laboratory accredited by National Accreditation Board for Testing and Calibration Laboratories (NABL) for measurement of Serum Testosterone level, preferably the former, on the advice of the said doctor.

List of Labs accredited by NABL and their scope of accreditation are available on their website [www.nabl-india.org](http://www.nabl-india.org). While selecting the lab it needs to be ascertained from the lab if it is accredited by NABL for SERUM Testosterone level measurement. Supporting document for the same may be taken from the said lab.

3.4 If the serum testosterone level is less than 2ng/ml; the doubt on the concerned Sports person will be addressed and she will be considered eligible to compete as a female Sports person in accordance with the present norms of IOC. However as there can be cases of Sports persons having 46, XY DSD, with plasma testosterone levels <2ng/ml; these Sports persons will be advised by the said doctor for voluntary evaluation at higher centers for chromosomal analysis and other investigations for appropriate management/ treatment.

In such cases, a copy of the report of medical examination and decision taken thereupon will be provided to the said Sports person vide confidential communication by the nodal officer who initiated the medical examination within 7 days of the decision.

3.5 In case, the serum testosterone level is higher than 2ng/ml the matter should be referred to a Medical panel constituted by SAI. In such case if the matter was being handled by NSF till this stage, the nodal officer of NSF is required to refer the matter to the nodal officer of SAI along with all related documents and reports on medical examination. The matter will be handled by SAI thereafter.

3.6 The report of medical examination by the doctor as in paras 3.1 to 3.5 above will be sent by the doctor in writing along with the detailed tests reports, observations and her concluding recommendations. The report should bear her signature, registration number and stamp. The report will be sent by the said doctor to the nodal officer who requested for the investigation. The said report will be confidential.



3.7 The medical panel to be constituted in cases where the serum testosterone level is higher than 2ng/ml, should necessarily comprise an Endocrinologist, Gynecologist, Genetic Expert and Psychologist. The medical panel can co-opt other specialists (eg. Radiologists, Psychiatrists, Paediatric Surgeons & Surgeons, etc.) if required during the detailed examination/evaluation of such Sports persons. The medical panel will comprise female doctors only and will be assisted by only female nurses, if required.

3.8 The Nodal officer of SAI (with the approval of DG SAI) will constitute the medical panel as stated above in an appropriate hospital of repute, preferably a government hospital, in the state from where the Sports person belongs to or where the Sports person is currently located. The nodal officer of SAI will intimate the concerned Sports person about the date, time and venue of the medical investigation by the medical panel. A copy of the report of the initial medical examination will also be provided to the said Sports person. The said communication to the Sports person will be confidential.

3.9 The detailed examination / evaluation by the medical panel will include the following tests

- (i) Plasma Adreno Cortico Tropic Hormone (ACTH) Level
- (ii) Di-Hydro Epiandrosterone Sulphate (DHEAD) Level
- (iii) Serom Cortisol Level
- (iv) Chromosomal Analysis (by peripheral blood lymphocyte culture)
- (v) Ultrasound of the pelvis for gonads and internal genital ducts
- (vi) Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI) Pelvis (should be done in case of equivocal findings on ultrasound)
- (vii) Psychological evaluation of the Sports person by psychologist (if required)

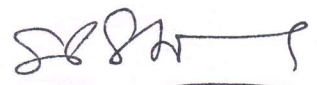
These tests should be carried out in the same hospital where the medical panel has been constituted. Only in exceptional circumstances should such tests be carried out outside the said hospital. In such a case, the said medical panel will record the circumstances and give justification as to why the tests were conducted outside the said medical college in their report.

3.10 The medical panel will give their report to the nodal officer of Sports Authority of India along with the detailed tests reports, observations and their concluding recommendations. The said report will be confidential. Based on the tests and observations, the medical panel will give either of the following recommendations along with justification for the same :-

- (i) The Sports person may be allowed to participate in the female category.
- (ii) The Sports person may not be allowed to participate in the female category.
- (iii) There is uncertainty and ambiguity on the issue even after these tests and examination, and the matter may be referred to AIIMS.

3.11 In respect of 3.10 (i) and (ii) above, the nodal officer of SAI will intimate the decision taken on the matter to the nodal officer of the concerned NSF in case NSF was dealing with the matter initially. A copy of the report of medical examination and

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decision taken thereupon will be sent to the said Sports person vide confidential communication by the nodal officer of SAI within 7 days of the decision taken in the matter.

3.12 In case of 3.10 (iii) above, SAI will refer the matter to AIIMS for further examination and take a decision based on the report of AIIMS. The nodal officer of SAI will intimate the concerned Sports person about the date, time and venue of the medical investigation by AIIMS. A copy of the report of the medical panel will also be provided to the said Sports person. The said communication to the Sports person will be confidential. The team of doctors for investigation in AIIMS will comprise only female doctors to the extent possible and will have at least 1 female doctor. The nursing assistant staff will be all female. Any medical examination of the Sports person in AIIMS will be in the presence of female doctor / female nursing staff. The report received from AIIMS alongwith the decision taken will be sent by the nodal officer of the SAI to the concerned Sports person within 7 days of the decision.

3.13 If a Sports person is not satisfied with the result of the medical examination by a doctor, she can apply for a review by the same doctor / another doctor. If a Sports person is not satisfied with the result of the medical examination by a panel of doctors, she can apply for a review by the same panel / another panel. The report of AIIMS will be reviewed by AIIMS itself on the request of the sportsperson being medically examined. The Sports person will make the request for review to the nodal officer who arranged the said medical examination within 30 days of receipt of the report of the said medical examination. The concerned nodal officer will arrange for such review. A copy of the report of such review and decision taken thereupon will be sent to the said Sports person vide confidential communication by the nodal officer dealing with the matter within 7 days of decision taken in the matter.

3.14 In case, it is finally decided that the Sports person is not eligible to compete in the female category, just the fact of disqualification is to be disclosed by the nodal officer of SAI to the nodal officer of the concerned NSF within 7 days of taking the decision. The reason for such disqualification should not be disclosed to anyone other than the Sports person.

#### **4.0 Important precautions and General conditions.**

4.1 The charges for all medical examinations as stated above will have to be borne by SAI / NSF initially asking the Sports person to undergo the test. Accordingly in cases where medical investigation was initiated by NSF and subsequently the matter was transferred to SAI, the nodal officer of SAI will request to nodal officer of the concerned NSF for re-imbursement of expenses incurred by SAI for medical investigation of the Sports person in this regard.

4.2 The medical examination being of a very personal nature has to be handled in most confidential and sensitive manner by each of the persons involved as stated in this document. Each of the person stated in this document is required to ensure that a minimum number of people are involved in the process.



4.3 None of the results of the medical examination as above are to be publicized. The results have to be kept completely confidential and are to be supplied only to the Sports person who is being examined, to the medical panel when one such panel is set up and if a second reference is necessary to AIIMS. The results must not be disclosed to any other person without the written consent of the Sports person. In the event of a disqualification on grounds of medical examination as per procedure herein, just the fact of disqualification should be disclosed to the nodal officer of the concerned NSF and the complainant, if any, as per para 2.3 (iii) above. The reason for such disqualification should not be disclosed. The nodal officer of the concerned NSF will ensure enforcement of the final decision regarding participation of the Sports person in the competitions as per this document.

4.4 In case, it is finally decided that the Sports person is not eligible to compete in the female category, any medal won by the Sports person / position obtained by virtue of participation in a sports competition in a female category will stand withdrawn. Nodal officers of SAI and NSF will take necessary action in this regard.

4.5 A Sports person will not be barred from competing till it is finally decided that the Sports person is not eligible for participation in the female category. However, the Sports person will have to take a decision on whether to compete or not. This is so because, the position and medal won while participating under the female category, if any, will stand withdrawn in case it is finally decided that the Sports person is not eligible for participation in the female category.

4.6 A copy of these guidelines are required to be provided to the Doctor / Panel of doctors / AIIMS by the nodal officer of NSF / SAI dealing with the matter while requesting the doctor(s) for conducting such medical examination of the Sports person.

4.7 As per para 8 (j) of the RTI Act, 2005, information regarding medical examination is exempt from disclosure under the Act.

4.8 A flow chart of this SOP is attached as **Annexure** .



## Standard Operative Procedures to identify Female Hyperandrogenism

- Written request of the athlete herself

- Written request of the Medical officer of SAI / NSF on the basis of her periodic health examination

- A written complaint

- Request Scrutinized by the Nodal Officer of SAI / NSF and decide whether to go ahead with the medical examination

Medical examination conducted by doctors of SAI / NSF

Request Rejected

Athlete Eligible

Athlete Not Eligible

if athlete is not satisfied, she may apply for a review within 30 days by the same doctor / another doctor

Examination Ambiguous, if

- Undescended testis (bilateral or unilateral)
- Hypospadias
- Clitoromegaly
- Inguinal Hernia in females (Unilateral or bilateral)
- Single perineal opening
- Lack of pubic hair
- Absence of secondary sexual characteristic like breast development, pubic hair growth in girls >14 years of age.

Serum Testosterone level is measured on advice of doctors of SAI/NSF from NDTL or NABL accredited laboratory, preferably the former

STL <2 ng/ml

Athlete Eligible

However as there can be cases of athletes having 46, XY DSD, with plasma testosterone levels <2ng/ml; these athletes will be advised by the said doctor for voluntary evaluation at higher centers for chromosomal analysis and other investigations for appropriate management/ treatment

STL >2 ng/ml

Matter Referred to Medical Panel constituted by SAI.

The medical panel should necessarily comprise an Endocrinologist, Gynecologist, Genetic Expert and Psychologist.

The medical panel can co-opt other specialists (eg. Radiologists, Psychiatrists, Paediatric Surgeons & Surgeons, etc.) if required

Examination / evaluation by the medical panel will include the following tests

- Plasma Adreno Cortico Trophic Hormone (ACTH) Level
- Di-Hydro Epiandrosterone Sulphate (DHEAD) Level
- Serum Cortisol Level
- Chromosomal Analysis (by peripheral blood lymphocyte culture)
- Ultrasound of the pelvis for gonads and internal genital ducts
- Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI) Pelvis (should be done in case of equivocal findings on ultrasound)
- Psychological evaluation of the athlete by psychologist (if required)

Athlete Eligible

Athlete Not Eligible

Ambiguous

if Athlete is not satisfied, She may apply for a review within 30 days by the same Panel / another Panel.

the matter referred to AIIMS.

Athlete Eligible

Athlete Not Eligible- No appeal on the report of AIIMS, However report of AIIMS can be reviewed by AIIMS itself.

Signature