



fact sheet: steroids

Office of National Drug Control Policy 2007

What Are Anabolic Steroids?

Steroids promote growth of muscle mass (Anabolic) and the development of male body characteristics, including facial hair and deep voice (Androgenic), in both males and females. Available legally only by prescription, anabolic steroids are prescribed to treat abnormally low levels of testosterone (for example, delayed puberty) and to reverse loss of muscle mass associated with certain diseases.

Current Use

According to "Monitoring the Future", the latest national survey on youth drug use, the use of steroids among young people is down by 45%, 45%, and 33% for lifetime, past year, and past month use, respectively. About 2.2% of twelfth grade students report having tried steroids (2007, Monitoring the Future Study).

Overview

In his 2004 State of the Union address, President Bush made it clear that he wants professional sports to do everything they can to "get rid of steroids now." The use of performance-enhancing drugs by professional athletes damages the credibility of their sport, endangers their health and safety, and sets a dangerous example for America's young people. Sports play an important role in the physical, mental and social development of young people, providing them with wholesome lessons about teamwork, goal-setting, discipline, and the value of hard work. The use of steroids and other performance-enhancing drugs undermines these benefits.

- In 1991, Congress added Anabolic Steroids as a Schedule III Drug in the Controlled Substances Act. In 2004, The Anabolic Steroid Control Act placed 32 additional steroids as Schedule III controlled substances.
- People abuse prescription steroids, or steroids smuggled illegally into the U.S. from other countries like Mexico, where steroids are not controlled prescription drugs.
- Steroids have been banned by the International Olympic Committee, National Collegiate Athletics Association, National Football League, National Basketball League, and Major League Baseball.
- Steroids are used illegally in doses typically 10-100 times higher than medical doses, to change body appearance and to enhance performance in sports.
- Steroids can affect nearly every organ system in the body: Men may develop prominent breasts, baldness, higher voice, and infertility. Women may develop a deeper voice, increased body hair, baldness, and increased appetite.
- For adolescents, growth may halt prematurely and accelerate puberty changes, preventing the typical adolescent growth spurt.

Effects of Steroid Use:

Acne
Depression
Decreased appetite
Insomnia
Weakened immune system
Hair loss
Anger
Heart attack or Stroke
Reversal of sex traits
Tumors of the liver

