

Laws and penalties for anabolic steroid abuse (cont'd)

years in prison and a fine of \$250,000 if this is the individual's first felony drug offense. If this is the second felony drug offense, the maximum period of imprisonment and the maximum fine both double. While the above listed penalties are for federal offenses, individual states have also implemented fines and penalties for illegal use of anabolic steroids.

The International Olympic Committee (IOC), National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA), and many professional sports leagues (e.g. Major League Baseball, National Basketball Association, National Football League (NFL), and National Hockey League) have banned the use of steroids by athletes, both because of their potential dangerous side effects and because they give the user an unfair advantage. The IOC, NCAA, and NFL have also banned the use of steroid precursors (e.g. androstenedione) by athletes for the same reason steroids were banned. The IOC and professional sports leagues use urine testing to detect steroid use both in and out of competition.

What can you do to help a friend who is abusing steroids?

The most important aspect to curtailing abuse is education concerning dangerous and harmful side effects, and symptoms of abuse. Athletes and others must understand that they can excel in sports and have a great body without steroids. They should focus on getting proper diet, rest, and good overall mental and physical health. These things are all factors in how the body is shaped and conditioned. Millions of people have excelled in sports and look great without steroids. For additional information on steroids please see our website at www.DEAdiversion.usdoj.gov

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ANABOLIC STEROIDS

HIDDEN DANGERS



March 2004

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What are anabolic steroids?

Anabolic steroids are synthetically produced variants of the naturally occurring male hormone testosterone. Both males and females have testosterone produced in their bodies: males in the testes, and females in the ovaries and other tissues. The full name for this class of drugs is androgenic (promoting masculine characteristics) anabolic (tissue building) steroids (the class of drugs). Some of the common street (slang) names for anabolic steroids include arnolds, gym candy, pumpers, roids, stackers, weight trainers, and juice.

Why do young people misuse steroids?

Anabolic steroids are primarily used by bodybuilders, athletes, and fitness “buffs” who claim steroids give them a competitive advantage and/or improve their physical performance. Steroids are purported to increase lean body mass, strength and aggressiveness. As a result, young people take steroids to increase their muscle size and strength, and, to reduce body fat which they believe improves personal appearance. For some young people appearance is the key to life.

Where do you get steroids?

Doctors may prescribe steroids to patients for legitimate medical purposes such as loss of function of testicles, breast cancer, low red blood cell count, delayed puberty and debilitated states resulting from surgery or sickness. Veterinarians administer steroids to animals (e.g. cats, cattle, dogs, and horses) for legitimate purposes such as to promote feed efficiency, and to improve weight gain, vigor, and hair coat. They are also used in veterinary practice to treat anemia and counteract tissue breakdown during illness and trauma. For purposes of illegal use there are

several sources; the most common illegal source is from smuggling steroids into the United States from other countries such as Mexico and European countries. Smuggling from these areas is easier because a prescription is not required for the purchase of steroids. Less often steroids found in the illicit market are diverted from legitimate sources (e.g. thefts or inappropriate prescribing) or produced in clandestine laboratories.

How are steroids taken?

Anabolic steroids dispensed for legitimate medical purposes are administered several ways including injection into the muscles or under the skin, by mouth, pellet implantation under the skin and by application to the skin (e.g. gels or patches). These same routes are used for purposes of abusing steroids, with injection and oral administration being the most common. The length of time that steroids stay in the body varies from a couple of days to more than 12 months.

Physical & Psychological dangers

Steroid users are vulnerable to physical and psychological side effects, many of which are irreversible in women. The short-term adverse physical effects of anabolic steroid abuse are fairly well known. However, the long-term adverse physical effects of anabolic steroid abuse have not been studied, and as such, are not known.

Laws and penalties for anabolic steroid abuse

Federal law placed anabolic steroids in Schedule III of the Controlled Substances Act (CSA) as of February 27, 1991. The possession or sale of anabolic steroids without a valid prescription is illegal. Simple possession of illicitly obtained anabolic steroids carries a maximum penalty of one year in prison and a minimum \$1,000 fine if this is an individual’s first drug offense. The maximum penalty for trafficking is five

For Guys	For Girls
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Baldness• Development of breasts• Painful erections• Shrinkage of testicles• Loss of function of testicles	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Growth of facial and body hair• Deepened voice• Breast reduction• Enlarged clitoris• Menstrual irregularities
For Both	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Acne• Jaundice (yellowing of the skin)• Swelling – Fluid retention• Stunted growth (close the growth plates in the long bones and permanently stunt their growth)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Increase in bad cholesterol levels• Decrease in good cholesterol levels• Mood swings• Increase in feelings of hostility• Increase in aggressive behavior