

# TIPS for TEENS

## STERIODS

### THE TRUTH ABOUT ANABOLIC STEROIDS



**SLANG: ARNOLDS/GYM CANDY/  
PUMPERS/STACKERS/  
WEIGHT TRAINERS/JUICE**

## GET THE FACTS

**STERIODS AFFECT YOUR HEART.** Steroid use and misuse have been associated with cardiovascular disease, including heart attack and stroke. Researchers found that steroid users had significantly weaker hearts than those who never used steroids.<sup>1</sup>

**STERIODS AFFECT YOUR MOOD.** Steroids can cause paranoid jealousy, extreme irritability, and impaired judgment. Extreme mood swings also can occur, including “roid rage”—angry feelings and behavior that may lead to violence.<sup>2</sup>

**STERIODS INCREASE YOUR RISK OF INFECTION.** Sharing needles or using dirty needles to inject steroids puts you at risk for diseases such as HIV/AIDS and hepatitis.<sup>3</sup>

## ? Q&A

**Q. WHAT ARE ANABOLIC STEROIDS?**

**A.** Anabolic steroids, commonly referred to as steroids, are medications related to testosterone, some of which are medicines approved for certain therapeutic uses. Bodybuilders and athletes may misuse steroids to build muscle, often taking doses much higher than would be prescribed for a medical condition, such as delayed puberty or muscle loss due to disease. Using them this way is not legal or safe.<sup>4</sup>

**Q. ARE STEROIDS ADDICTIVE?**

**A.** Yes, they can be. Withdrawal symptoms include mood swings, suicidal thoughts or attempts, fatigue, restlessness, loss of appetite, and loss of sleep.<sup>5</sup>

**Q. WHAT CAN I DO TO EXCEL IN SPORTS IF I DON'T USE STEROIDS?**

**A.** Focus on eating a proper diet and getting plenty of rest. These are important factors in mental and physical health and conditioning. Millions of athletes excel in sports without using steroids.

### THE BOTTOM LINE:

Many people are prescribed steroids for medical reasons, but steroids can still be deadly. Talk to your parents, a doctor, a counselor, a teacher, or another adult you trust if you have questions.

### LEARN MORE:

Get the latest information on how drugs affect the brain and body at [teens.drugabuse.gov](https://teens.drugabuse.gov).

### TO LEARN MORE ABOUT STEROIDS, CONTACT:

**SAMHSA**

**1-877-SAMHSA-7 (1-877-726-4727)**

(English and Español)

**TTY 1-800-487-4889**

[www.samhsa.gov](https://www.samhsa.gov)

[store.samhsa.gov](https://store.samhsa.gov)



**SAMHSA**

Substance Abuse and Mental Health  
Services Administration



# BEFORE YOU RISK IT!

1

**KNOW THE LAW.** Steroids are illegal to have without a prescription from a licensed physician.<sup>6</sup> It is illegal for individuals to sell steroids.

2

**GET THE FACTS.** Doctors prescribe steroids for specific medical conditions. They are only safe for use when a doctor prescribes them and monitors their effects.<sup>7</sup>

3

**KNOW THE RISKS.** Most anabolic steroids sold illegally in the United States come from abroad. Thefts and inappropriate prescribing, as well as production in secret labs, also lead to illegal steroid sales.<sup>8</sup>

4

**LOOK AROUND YOU.** The majority of teens aren't using steroids. Only 0.6 percent of 8th graders, 0.7 percent of 10th graders, and 1.1 percent of 12th graders reported steroid use in the past year.<sup>9</sup>



# KNOW THE SIGNS

How can you tell if a friend is using steroids? Symptoms of steroids use may include:<sup>10</sup>

## FOR GUYS

- Hair loss
- Development of breasts
- Impotence

## FOR GIRLS

- Growth of facial hair
- Deepened voice
- Breast reduction

## FOR BOTH

- Acne
- Jaundice (yellowing of the skin)
- Swelling of feet or ankles
- Aching joints
- Bad breath
- Mood swings
- Nervousness
- Trembling



## WHAT CAN YOU DO TO HELP SOMEONE WHO IS USING STEROIDS?

### BE A FRIEND. SAVE A LIFE.

Encourage your friend to stop using or seek help from a parent, teacher, or other caring adult.

For 24/7 free and confidential information and treatment referrals in English and Español, call SAMHSA's National Helpline at:

**1-800-662-HELP (1-800-662-4357)**

or visit the SAMHSA Behavioral Health Treatment Services Locator at:

[findtreatment.samhsa.gov](http://findtreatment.samhsa.gov)

## MORE INFORMATION

FOR MORE INFORMATION OR FOR RESOURCES USED IN THIS

# "TIPS for TEENS,"

visit [store.samhsa.gov](http://store.samhsa.gov) or call  
**1-877-SAMHSA-7 (1-877-726-4727)**  
(English and Español).

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# SAMHSA

Substance Abuse and Mental Health  
Services Administration

<sup>1</sup> CardioSmart. (2017). Anabolic Steroids Increase Risk for Heart Disease in Young and Middle-Aged Men. American College of Cardiology. Retrieved from <https://www.cardiosmart.org/News-and-Events/2017/07/Anabolic-Steroids-Increase-Risk-for-Heart-Disease-in-Young-and-MiddleAged-Men>

<sup>2,4,10</sup> National Institute on Drug Abuse. (2016). Anabolic steroids. *Drug Facts*. Retrieved from <https://www.drugabuse.gov/publications/drugfacts/anabolic-steroids>

<sup>3</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2018). Injection Drug Use and HIV Risk. Retrieved from <https://www.cdc.gov/hiv/risk/idu.html>

<sup>5,6,7</sup> National Institute on Drug Abuse. (2018). Anabolic steroids. *NIDA for Teens*. Retrieved from <https://teens.drugabuse.gov/drug-facts/anabolic-steroids>

<sup>8</sup> National Institute on Drug Abuse. (2018). Steroids and Other Appearance and Performance Enhancing Drugs (APEDs). Retrieved from <https://www.drugabuse.gov/publications/research-reports/steroids-other-appearance-performance-enhancing-drugs-aped/what-history-anabolic-steroid-use>

<sup>9</sup> Miech, R. A., Schulenberg, J. E., Johnston, L. D., Bachman, J. G., O'Malley, P. M., & Patrick, M. E. (December 14, 2017). National adolescent drug trends in 2017: Findings released. *Monitoring the Future*. Retrieved from <http://monitoringthefuture.org/data/17data/17drtbl2.pdf>