

The truth about steroids in today's world



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The truth about steroids in today's world 19th December, 2012. Outline

Thesis statement: To prevent steroids we must first define what steroids are, discuss reasons for potential use and teaching about physical and

physiological effects. Part 1: History of steroids Today's world Who are the users? Part 2: The sciences behind it Effects on behavior Addiction and

withdraws Part 3: Programs without steroids Patience's that use steroids

Conclusion History of steroids Since the 1950s athletes have been using

many different assortments and variations of anabolic steroids in order to increase their muscle mass and athletic performance. Yet, only recently over

the last ten to twenty years has the general public also began to indulge in anabolic steroid use. The main sect of the population that has allowed

anabolic steroids to become so widespread over the years has been athletes

at all levels of competition. From paid professional athletes to high school and junior high school performers, anabolic steroid has become a recent

epidemic in all facets of athletics. The only way to prevent anabolic steroid use from growing is by defining what an anabolic steroid is, by discussing

reasons for potential use, through teaching others about the physical and physiological effects of anabolic steroids, and some recent programs to

prevent steroid use. The origin of anabolic steroids comes from the male sex hormone taken in order to increase growth and weight gain. They work by

increasing the metabolic process during protein synthesis. The world was

first introduced to this sex hormone during the late 1930s where most

steroids were used to treat hypogonadism, which is a condition when a male does not produce sufficient testosterone for normal growth, development,

and sexual functioning. Also during the 1930s it was discovered that anabolic steroids increased the skeletal growth of laboratory animals, which

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subsequently led anabolic steroids to be used by body builders and weightlifters. Today's world The uses of anabolic steroids in these athletic fields were soon banned from the sports because habitual use of the drug often affected the outcome of these contests. This is why today most steroids are illegal and the only way to acquire them is through illegal smuggling of the product. Besides true anabolic steroids there are steroid supplements that can be used as alternatives to this illegal drug. Some examples of steroid supplements that can be purchased legally are aredehydroepian-drosterone (DHEA) and androstenedione (Andro). These types of steroid supplements along with other true illegal anabolic steroids can be taken orally, injected into the muscle, or rubbed on the skin in the form of gels and creams. Most anabolic steroids are used in a pattern called cycling where an athlete takes multiple doses of the steroids rotating being on and off the drug over a certain period of time. Also many anabolic steroid users often combine different types of steroids in a process called stacking where users believe that by taking an assortment of steroids that they will produce a greater muscle development then taking the steroids individually. Finally, another way of taking steroids is through a method called pyramiding where users slowly increase steroid use until they reach a certain point where they then slowly decrease steroid use until they are completely off the drug. No matter how or what type of steroid or steroid supplement a person decides to use there are reasons for every athletes or ordinary persons rational to indulge in and become a statistic of the soaring increase in anabolic steroid use. Who are the users? Surprising it is not only football players or weightlifters that are users of anabolic steroids but steroid users range from every possible spectrum. White and blue collar workers and <https://assignbuster.com/the-truth-about-steroids-in-todays-world/>

females are also common anabolic steroid users, but recently anabolic steroids have become popular among adolescents who feel steroids will help them look, feel, and perform better in every facet of their young lives. Recent surveys have shown that 2. 8% of 8th graders, 3. 5% of 10th graders, and 3. 5 % of 12th graders (Drug Facts) have reported using steroids at one point in their lives. Also among 19-22 year olds surveyed in 2000, 18. 9% reported having a friend who was a current user of anabolic steroids. In each category, anabolic steroid use is up considerably since the previous year for high school students and young adults. These statistics make it obvious that anabolic steroid use has increased each year and has become more common for high school students and athletes. The main reason for their use in many adolescents is that it is believed anabolic steroid use will help improve their athletic performance. Yet, no anabolic steroid legal or illegally improves an athlete's agility, skill, or cardiovascular capacity. The only way an anabolic steroid can improve athletic ability is through increased muscle mass and strength. For this reason, anabolic steroid use typically depends on the type of sport with weightlifters and football players being the most predominant users. The reason weightlifters, football players, and many athletes in general turn to steroids is because of the must win personality of many competitive athletes. Often athletes are caught up in winning and lose sight of what really counts and that is to enjoy themselves and have fun as a team. Yet there is always one athlete who is truly dedicated and yearns to go as far as possible in his sport and win a championship. Sometimes athletes will take an " at any cost" approach in which they are willing to do anything for the betterment of their team and their own personal success. This types of give it everything you have approach is diagnosed by doctors as a

compulsive personality where success and winning means everything. This winning attitude is often a great attribute but when it is not handled sensibly athletes may turn to steroids to help give them an advantage over their competitors. This need to win and drive to be the best has caused some athletes to risk any danger just to get the winning edge. These compulsives to be the best even forces some athletes to increase their steroid consumption, subsequently increasing the effects of steroid use. Another intention for people to turn to steroids besides athletic reasons is that some people have a distorted perspective of their bodies often become anabolic steroid users. Another reason for anabolic steroid use besides for athletic or mental reasons is for those who have experience forms of physical and sexual abuse. People who fall into this category often feel that they need to increase their muscle mass in order to protect themselves and discourage further attacks because they believe men would find them either intimidating or unattractive and free them from abuse. Because of the recent increase in anabolic steroid abuse in all age groups and that users can be pinpointed as athletes, muscle dysmorphia patients, or trying to prevent physical abuse; the only way to help slow down the growing rate of steroid abuse is through teaching others the possible effects of steroids. The sciences behind it When anabolic steroids are taken in prescribed doses it is because a male adolescent does not produce sufficient testosterone, even in this prescribed case an adolescent can still be develop numerous side effects from the steroids. Therefore, if a person is taking non-prescribed anabolic steroids the risk for danger and detrimental health problems only becomes more prevalent. Dr. Walder who is a Medicine professor and part of the effort to educate the public about the dangers of anabolic steroids says, " There

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can be a whole panoply of side effects, even with prescribed doses. Some are visible to the naked eye and some are internal. Some are physical, others are psychological. With unsupervised steroid use, wanton ' megadosing' or stacking, the effects can be irreversible or undetected until it's too late. " Additionally Dr. Walder also complies, " unlike almost all other drugs, all steroid based hormones have on unique characteristic-their dangers may not manifest for months, years, and even decades. Therefore, long after you gave them up you may develop side effects. " Because of the wide range and long time frame in which anabolic steroids may develop, they have been related to an extensive list of possible side effects from physically unattractive to life threatening consequences. Most consequences can be reversed if the user halts taking anabolic steroids yet often there are some permanent side effects. Some of the areas that are affected by anabolic steroid use are the hormonal system, musculoskeletal system, cardiovascular system, liver, skin, and misuse can also lead to psychiatric effects. Anabolic steroid affects the hormonal system by disrupting the normal production of hormones in the body. Some of these problems that result from anabolic steroid use on the hormonal system can be very serious and often irreversible. Some of the irreversible effects on males are that anabolic steroids will cause baldness and breast development. Males also experience some temporary side effects of reduced sperm production and shrinking of the testicles. Often these effects can be reversed if the user discontinues anabolic steroid use. In males the effects of anabolic steroids seem minor, while in females the effects of anabolic steroids are much more serious because they often cause masculinization. This means that females experience a decrease in breast size and body fat. Also the skin becomes

coarse, the clitoris enlarges, the voice deepens and women experience growth of body hair but seemingly lose hair on their scalp. Anabolic steroids also affect the musculoskeletal system because anabolic steroids cause rising hormones which causes growth spurts. When these hormones reach certain levels it causes the bones to stop growing and locks a person in their maximum height. This especially affects adolescents because anabolic steroids will cause the bones of a person to stop growing sooner than they normally would and thus affecting the musculoskeletal system by inhibiting growth. Dr. Wadler confirms, " Once these growth plates are closed, they cannot reopen so adolescents that take too many steroids may end up shorter than they should have been. " Besides affecting the musculoskeletal system and the hormonal system, anabolic steroids also lead to many serious consequences by affecting the cardiovascular system. Besides causing serious harm to the cardiovascular, hormonal, and musculoskeletal systems, anabolic steroids can also cause detrimental damage to a user's skin and liver. Steroid use can cause the skin to become oily leading to acne and cysts all over a user's body. Anabolic steroids can also cause liver tumors and a condition called peliosis hepatis, in which blood-filled cysts take harbor in a user's liver. The tumors and cysts can often rupture causing internal bleeding which can lead to a whole new wave of problems. Because anabolic steroids may be used through nonsterile injection techniques abusers can acquire life-threatening illnesses such as HIV and hepatitis B and C. Effects on behavior Anabolic steroids also have many unfortunate effects on behavior often causing increased levels of irritability and aggression; therefore an excessive steroid user can be in a very unstable state of mind. Dr. Walder confirms that, " They can go from bouts of

depression or extreme irritability to feelings of invincibility and outright aggression, commonly called roid rage. This is a dangerous state beyond mere assertiveness. " Some users report that they have engaged in physical fighting, armed robbery, or use force to obtain something when they take steroids rather than when they are drug-free. Researchers have also suggested that steroid users may commit aggressive acts and property crimes not because of the effects of steroids but because users have been affected by the media to believe steroids are linked to aggression. Because of this users often use this excuse to commit aggressive acts and property crimes. Besides aggression related crimes, anabolic steroids are also found to cause other behavioral effects including euphoria, increased energy, sexual arousal, mood swings, distractibility, forgetfulness, and confusion. Because of all these negative social problems that relate to anabolic steroid use many researchers believe that in some cases steroid use can become addictive. Addictive behavior is shown through people continuing to take steroids in spite of the numerous physical problems, the negative effects in relationships, and irritability. Also, people spend large sums of time and money in order to obtain anabolic steroids. Addiction and withdraws Furthermore, many users experience withdrawal symptoms such as mood swings, fatigue, restlessness, loss of appetite, insomnia, reduced sex drive, when they discontinue anabolic steroid use. One deciding factor that leads researches to believe that steroids are indeed addictive is that users often experience depression because it sometimes leads to suicide attempts. Dr. Walder observes that, " Addiction is an extreme of dependency, which maybe psychological, if not physical, phenomena. Regardless, there is no question that when regular steroid users stop taking the drug they get

withdrawal pains and they start up again the pain goes away. They have difficulties stopping use even though they know it's bad for them. " Because of the adverse effects of anabolic steroids on a user's body and behavior there has been a continual effort to educate students and athletes about preventing steroid use before it becomes a problem. Recently the NIDA funded a drug abuse prevention program in order to show high school athletes that they do not need to take anabolic steroids to build powerful muscles and improve athletic performance. Programs without steroids Today this program has become the ATLAS (The Adolescents Training and Learning to Avoid Steroids) program with its sole purpose to prevent student-athletes from using anabolic steroids in high school sports. " ATLAS uses a team-oriented educational approach that motivates and empowers student athletes to make the right choices about steroid use, " says Dr. Linn Goldberg, who led the research team that developed and tested this special program. The program gives student athletes knowledge and skills to resist steroid use yet still allows them to achieve their athletic goals in healthier and more effective ways. One main component of the program is time spent in the classroom where students begin learning about anabolic steroids. The classroom sessions are conducted by football coaches and student leaders who discuss the effects of steroids, the elements of sports nutrition, and strength training alternatives. For the most part the sessions are run by their peers who conduct and run the discussions themselves. According to Dr. Goldberg, " It's kids talking to kids; that's an important ingredient in our program. " Another component of ATLAS is its weight training aspect where professional trainers are able to teach athletes the proper weight training techniques. This helps students to build the strength and agility they desire

and to achieve their athletic goals without the intervention of steroids. The final aspect of the ATLAS program is the parent information component where parents participate in an information and discussion about preventing steroid use in their household. The ATLAS staff provides the parents with a sports nutrition guide and helps them to reinforce the non-steroid approach at home and encourage the parents to provide healthier meals. Besides providing information on the dangers of steroids, ATLAS helps broaden the student's knowledge of proper nutrition and exercise habits. " The program's positive effects flow from changing the student athletes' attitudes and perceptions about steroids and then changing their nutrition and exercise behaviors, " says Dr. Goldberg. A series of studies has shown that team-centered approach reduces adolescents from using steroids in high school sports by 50 percent (drug facts). Not only are anabolic steroids physical detrimental but also physiologically because of all the negative behaviors that result. Yet overall society has become aware of the steroid problem that has struck the world and is now effortlessly trying to educate and end the anabolic steroid epidemic. Today there are more than one hundred different types of anabolic steroids that have been developed and every single steroid is illegal unless prescribed by a doctor. This should be every potential user's first inclination of the harmful nature of anabolic steroids because of the sheer number of steroids that are illegal. Yet, these drugs are available legally only by prescription in order to treat conditions that occur because the body produces low amounts of testosterone, such as delayed puberty. Patients that use steroids Steroids are the unsung heroes of cancer care. While chemo and radiation get all the accolades for killing cancer, steroids work quietly behind the scenes, preventing and minimizing complications

and even making other therapies work better. They play a big role in the treatment of blood and marrow cancers, Steroids are chemicals that are produced by glands in our bodies. They regulate many of our natural functions, from our body temperature and blood pressure to our emotions. Pharmaceutically produced, synthetic steroids are used for a number of reasons in medicine. Steroids are a key component in the treatment of leukemia, lymphoma and myeloma. Why Do I Need Steroids? In the treatment of blood and marrow cancers, steroids can serve a number of functions. Some examples include:

- . To help prevent an allergic reaction to a blood product transfusion or medication
- . To reduce swelling in spinal cord compression of myeloma
- . To decrease inflammation
- . To helps control nausea and vomiting
- . To helps increase your appetite
- . To treat pain
- . To treat skin reactions

Conclusion It may not seem logical to an ordinary person to use steroids because of the numerous side effects but often users feel pressured by society and often feel steroids are the only answer. Athletes feel that in order to win a championship or become the next high paid professional athlete that they need an edge and use steroids to become bigger, stronger, and faster than their competitors. Also, society makes people feel that every male must have bulging muscles and every female bust have a rock hard body and because of this pressure people become addictive to steroids by using them in excessive amounts for the sole purpose of being accepted. Overall a person must weigh the pros and cons of steroid use and realize that there are more important things than being the best-trained athlete or having the most toned body and that is a person's health

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