

# Performance enhancement drugs in sports



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Performance Enhancement Drugs in Sports Taresha Bryant COM 112 -

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Performance Enhancement Drugs In Sports Athletic competition has been a part of our society since the beginning of time. We were born with the competitive gene; the desire to be better than the next man. Sports events give athletes the opportunity to prove, they are better than their competitor. This is good because it shows courage and determination; on the other hand, many have taken it to the extreme. Athletes will do anything to beat their competition; including taking performance enhancement drugs. It is believed that 7 out of 8 athletes are using these drugs. Athletes are now being forced to talk about their steroid use. In December 2003 the federal grand jury investigated the BALCO Corporation because of their illegal distribution of performance enhancement drugs. According to reports from BALCO, the list of steroid users is linked to the Most Valued Players (MVP) in Major League Baseball (MLB). The names being dropped are Barry Bonds, Jason Giambi and Gary Sheffield. These athletes believe taking performance enhancement drugs better their chances to win. " Athletes have taken natural or synthetic performance aids since the earliest days of organized sports competition" (Clark, Cooper and Griffen, 525). The usages of performance enhancement drugs as well as the illegal distribution and production of steroids have become too widespread. This needs to be stopped. Performance Enhancement drugs are threatening the integrity of the game. Below are the strong reasons I feel steroid use in sports needs to be stopped: 1. What exactly are performance enhancement drugs? 2. How do performance enhancement drugs work? 3. What are the health hazards? 4. Why do athletes continue to use enhancement drugs? 5. Athletes caught using <https://assignbuster.com/performance-enhancement-drugs-in-sports/>

performance enhancement drugs should be penalized. What Exactly Are Performance Enhancement Drugs? Performance Enhancement drugs mostly known as steroids is a synthetic form of male hormone. Steroids are broken down into a two different ways: Anabolic = growing or building Androgenic = masculinization; developing male sexual characteristics Anabolic/androgenic steroids are also know as, energy boosters. Anabolic steroids are classified as Schedule III drugs in accordance with the Controlled Substance Act (U. S. Department of Justice - DEA, 1997). Today anabolic steroids are chemically manufactured. Most healthy males produce between 2 to 10 milligrams of testosterone a day. Testosterone is largely responsible for the change in muscle, bone structure and density. Testosterone first starts working in the mail reproductive system during the puberty, assisting with the growth of body hair and the deepening of the voice. Steroids give the athletes an increased amount of male testosterone which increases their strength and size. Taking bigger doses of testosterone will also produce more growth and development. The result of taking anabolic steroids is beneficial to athletes because it helps them to gain physical strength, train harder and build their muscle. The ability to gain weight and building muscle quickly is very appealing to today's athletes. They think that by doing this, it gives them the power and strength to be the best at what they do. Athletes know that if they get injured their body repairs quicker being on steroids. How Do Performance Enhancement Drugs Work? There are two types of steroids; oral and injectible. Oral steroids are pills that can be detected in the body for weeks or month after the person stops taking them. Injectible steroids are injected into muscle tissue. Injectible steroids are slowly released out of the muscle and into the body. The body tolerates injectible steroids more efficiently and

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that is the reason why athletes prefer them. Some athletes will even combine oral steroids with injectible steroids for a deadly combination. This deadly use of combining steroids is called mega dosing. A prime example of mega dosing is Jason Giambi's accounts of how he used steroids. Giambi states " he injected HgH (human growth hormone) into his stomach, testosterone into his buttocks, rubbed and undetectable steroids known as " the cream" on his body and placed drops of another, called " the clear," under his tongue." (ABC NEWS) Steroids enhance the performance of the athlete. Athletes push their bodies to a limit that they would never think of doing if they were not on steroids. Athletes who take steroids are known to lift weights 2 times their body weight. Why? Because steroids allow them to push their bodies with out feeling the strain or limitations their body can't handle. Some athletes are known to get hernias because they strain so much from lifting weights. You can spot an athlete who takes steroids; they are usually the athletes sitting on the disabled list. They usually have a number of ailments stemming from steroids use for example: torn ligaments, torn muscle, strained hamstring, strained quadriceps, strained calf muscles, ruptured tendons in their wrist and torn rotator cuffs. Athletes don't realize that they are making their muscle too big for their tendons and ligaments. Their bodies can't handle the extra pressure and that is how they end up injuring themselves. What Are The Health Hazards? There are a number of side effects associated with taking steroids. Some steroids are legally prescribed by a doctor if you are suffering from; anemia, osteoporosis, growth stimulation gonadal dysfunction or any gynecological disorder. But we will discuss the illegal way steroids are being used by athletes. Some side effects from taking steroids are visible, and some are internal. Some are

physical and some are psychological. Below is a list of side effects for men, woman as well as the deadly combination of steroids: Men: tend to get feminine tendencies when they start taking steroids. • Reduced sperm count • Impotence • Developing breast • Shrinking testicles • Difficulty urinating Woman: tend to get masculine tendencies when taking steroids. • Facial hair • Deepened voices • Breast reduction • Changes in menstrual cycle Combination: combining oral and injectable steroids. • Acne • Bloating appearance • Rapid weight gain • Liver damage • Premature heart attacks and strokes • Elevated cholesterol levels • Weakened tendons. Athletes also go through a serious mood swing while on performance enhancement drugs. One minute they are okay and the next minute they are depressed and extremely irritable. Some times they may even feel invincible and extreme aggression. To them, this is the perfect time to hit the gym. They can take the aggression out in the gym. This is when they go to the gym and they are lifting and pushing unbelievable weights. This is when the steroids do the most damage to their bodies. Why Do Athletes Continue To Use Enhancement Drugs If They Are Illegal? Most athletes continue to take performance enhancement drug because they believe it improves their game performance. It gives them the competitive edge they need to compete. They also feel that by taking performance enhancement drugs they are able to financially secure their career as well as their future. They feel their game will be much better than if they did not. Jason Giambi told grand jurors, " He didn't notice a huge difference in his performance after starting to use performance enhancement drugs." (ABC NEWS) Athletes continue to use performance enhancement drugs to keep up with the growing number of athletes using them. Some athletes are taking them

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because they are so widely accepted now. It is the choice for athletes looking for that competitive edge. Many big league players take enhancement drugs for the jolt of energy it gives them as well as it sharpens their senses. Ken Caminiti stated that " He used steroids in 1996 and his performance improved noticeably and his skills became more sophisticated over the next five seasons." (SI June 2000) " Anabolic steroids are so easy to get, in some countries you can even purchase them over the counter. Athletes living on the west coast don't have to go far to get steroids. All they have to do is drive to Mexico. Athletes are able to get whatever they want. Or they can just get them from their trainer or member of the staff who knows someone who knows someone. How prevalent is the use of steroids? Survey and anecdotal evidence indicate that the rate of non-medical steroids use may be increasing. Reports of steroid use indicate that between 250, 000 and 1 million individuals use. According to Yesalis (1998) more than 300, 000 used steroids during one year. The National Institute of Health (1999) reported that 2. 9% of 12th graders used steroids. So many high school and college athletes take steroids. The students feel they need to use steroids in order to compete. They feel that it will give them the edge they need as well as the size they need to compete. It is also believed to be a self-esteem issue with young athletes. Not really understand the damage they are doing to their bodies. According to Yesalis (1998) there seems to be a small decline in male college students using steroids. But the amount of woman using steroids has become increasingly disturbing. Woman are more susceptible to have permanent damage from steroids. Athletes Caught Using Performance Enhancement Drugs Should Be Penalized. The athletic association should really enforce the law against performance enhancement drugs in sports.

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Performance enhancement drugs are against the laws but not all athletic associations test for performance enhancement drugs. The Major League Baseball Players Association has resisted any form of drug testing but now has to face there is a serious problem. So athletes continue to use them with no consequence. Even if they are caught using drugs they aren't penalized so they continue to use them. Performance enhancements drugs have taken the genetic lottery out of becoming a naturally successful athlete. I don't think athletes should be allowed to enhance their performance when some athletes believe in being a true athlete not an enhanced athlete. I believe the athletic association should really start enforcing this law. If they don't start enforcing this law, more and more athletes will die. They will feel the need to take performance enhancement drugs to compete with the numerous amounts of athletes already taking performance enhancement drugs. " No one denies that it is a problem," says Commissioner Bud Selig. " It is a problem we can and must deal with now, rather than years from now when the public says, ' Why did you do something about it?' I'm very worried about this." (Verducci 2002) Congress Recently Passed The Anabolic Steroid Control Act of 2004. Finally it looks like someone else believes players should not be allowed to play if they are tested positive for steroids. Steroid use has become a major problem in today's sports world, especially in Major League Baseball (MLB). There are some major league players being accused of taking steroids; Jason Giambi, Gary Sheffield, Barry Bonds, Jose Conseco, Ken Caminiti and Mark McGwire. This has been an ongoing problem for the baseball industry more so than from any other sport. Major League Baseball didn't ban steroids until September 30, 2002. The NFL and the NBA both randomly test for steroids. The MLB is the only federation that did not test

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their major league players. Testing with penalties started only this year. Each player is tested once from the start of spring training through the end of the year. A player, who tests positive the first time for steroids, receives counseling. A second offense and you are suspended for 15 days. If you are caught a fifth time, you will be suspended for one year. They do however randomly test their minor league players. But if they test positive, they aren't fined or even told to sit on the bench for a couple of days. There is no form of discipline if they test positive for steroids. MLB Commissioner Bud Selig stated, " This important legislation will help us reach our goal of a zero tolerance in the battle against steroids."(ESPN 2004). Commissioner Bud Selig, who has called for more frequent testing and harsher penalties, told Colorado Gov. Bill Owens two weeks ago that an argument was near. (December 2004). We know need to address the source of the problem, rather than the athletes. The makers and distributors of these harmful and illegal substances must be caught and then penalized. The Bay Area Laboratory Co-Operatives (BALCO), is being is being probed in the illegal distribution of performance enhancement drugs to athletes. The founders of BALCO, Victor Conte, Vice President James Valente, track coach Remi Korchemny and Greg Anderson (Barry Bonds personal trainer) have all pleaded not guilty to the charges, of steroid distribution. (AP December 2004). It is important that we do something about this problem because minor league athletes will take these steroids without understand the damages that they can cause to their bodies. As I have repeatedly stated, I am fully committed to the goal of immediately ridding our great games of illegal performance-enhancing substances. I am aware the Major League Baseball Player's Association is having its annual meeting with its executive

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board of player representatives next week. I urge the players and their association to emerge from this meeting ready to join me in adopting a new, stronger drug-testing policy modeled after our minor league program that will once and for all rid the game of the scourge of illegal drugs. References

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