

Steroids and masculinity



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Steroids and Masculinity We live in a competitive world. Rightly put forth by Darwin, “ survival of the fittest” theory stands true even today. Mentally and physically fit people find ways to fight the obstacles in their path. It cannot be assured that all people are honest to the system and simultaneously true to themselves. Here comes the question of ethics. The ways they implement to survive in the competitive world aren’t always ethically correct. This lands them in a pool of “ temporary success and satisfaction”. One of the popular ways to achieve fitness is to consume steroids. Steroids are chemical substances which induce changes in hormonal secretions. They are naturally occurring or synthetic fat-soluble organic compounds which are in diverse range including bile acids, vitamin D, cholesterol etc (Steroids). They encourage masculinity and add strength to one’s body. Physical fitness reflects mental upliftment. This steroid consumption slowly becomes an addiction. Following essay addresses the issue of steroid intake in men, its impacts- positive and negative and substitute measures to steroid intake. There are many reasons prevailing in the society for the widespread use of steroids. The media holds a strong influence on the minds of people. They publicize and advocate weight loss, leaner body structures and attractive figures while promoting celebrity endorsed products. This provokes men to be like those celebrities whom they admire. The use of steroids is related with the degree of satisfaction that men have about their own body structure. Some people are believed to have a behavioural syndrome: ‘ muscle dysmorphia’; in this condition although men have strong and large muscular built, they still think they are weak (Why Do People Abuse Anabolic Steroids). This mental dilemma forces them to take external help in the form of steroids to build their body according to their hypothetical body image.

Men are lured into taking steroids because of its benefits which are- muscle and strength gain, increased agility, increased stamina and increased endurance in any of the physical activities (The Benefits of Using Steroids). Some other benefits include enhanced functioning of sexual organs, treatment of various disorders such as asthma, kidney problems, facial paralysis attacks, Alzheimer's disease, cancer, etc (The Advantages and Benefits of Steroids).

As every coin has two sides, so does the consumption of steroids. Some health hazards due to its consumption are- hair loss, fertility problems, insomnia, headache, shrinking testes, enlarged breasts in men, increased aggression and hostile attitude, depression etc (Steroids). An overdose of steroids is very dangerous. They may cause a redistribution of fat in the body leading to swollen face and belly but thin arms and legs; it may also hamper the natural immunity of body making it more susceptible to infections (Steroids).

Steroids affect secretion of the hormone testosterone. Higher levels of this chemical prevents the body from muscle breakdown, muscular strength changes and body “ appears” strong. Muscularity and masculinity go hand in hand; there is an unsaid cultural association between these two factors (Grogan). These can be easily achieved by consuming steroids. As effortless achievement is always preferred by human race, men succumb to steroid intake in order to become muscular and powerful. This gives them immense satisfaction and confidence.

In my opinion, anything in excess is hazardous. Same applies to steroids. As they have too many benefits, their consumption cannot be stopped completely but we can come up with alternative ways which include regular

exercise and fitness regime carried under the guidance of health experts, including naturally available vitamin and protein sources in daily diet, and consuming steroids as and when needed strictly under a doctor's prescription. Temporary techniques to enhance performance and looks can be very dangerous in long run.

Above study shows us how steroids come into picture when “strong-being” rather than “well being” is thought of. Time and again it has been proven to us that excessive consumption of steroids may lead to death. This was inevitable as observed in some athletes. The use of steroids has become a great concern because it is restricted not only to athletes, body builders and ill patients but has also spread among common masses who dare to consume steroids without medical prescription (Henry). Steroids should be considered unhealthy and sale of steroids to common man without medical reason should be stopped. Our existence should not be put at stake just for the sake of appearance!

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