



Drug Enforcement Administration Newark Division

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INTELLIGENCE BULLETIN: STERIODS

A recent study conducted by a doctor at Harvard Medical School disclosed that the number of young men using steroids has skyrocketed. In 2002, nearly a half a million teenage boys used steroids. And results from the 2002 Monitoring the Future Study, which surveys students in eighth, tenth, and twelfth grades, shows that 2.5% of eighth graders, 3.5% of tenth graders, and 4% of twelfth graders reported using steroids at least once in their lifetimes. Concerns over a growing illicit market, abuse by teenagers, and the uncertainty of possible harmful long-term effects of steroid use, led Congress in 1991 to place anabolic steroids as a class of drugs into Schedule III of the Controlled Substances Act (CSA). The CSA defines anabolic steroids as any drug or hormonal substance chemically and pharmacologically related to testosterone (other than estrogens, progestins, and corticosteroids) that promotes muscle growth.

Anabolic-androgenic steroids are man-made substances related to male sex hormones. Currently there are more than 100 different types of steroids that have been developed and each requires a prescription to be used legally in the United States. These drugs are used to treat conditions that occur when the body produces abnormally low amounts of testosterone, such as delayed puberty and some types of impotence. They are also used to treat body wasting in patients with AIDS and other diseases that result in loss of lean muscle mass. ***Abuse of anabolic steroids, however, can lead to serious health problems, some irreversible.***

Steroids can be ingested, injected, or rubbed on the skin in the form of gels or creams. Illicit anabolic steroids are often sold at gyms, competitions, and through mail operations. Steroids are also illegally diverted from U.S. pharmacies or synthesized in clandestine laboratories. Anabolic steroids are illicitly smuggled from Mexico and European countries to the United States.

The major side effects from abusing anabolic steroids can include liver tumors and cancer, jaundice, fluid retention, high blood pressure, increase in LDL (bad cholesterol), and decreases in HDL (good cholesterol). Other side effects include kidney tumors, severe acne, bad breath, swelling of the feet or ankles, aching joints, contracting/transmitting HIV/AIDS or hepatitis, trembling, mood swings, and aggression ("roid rage"). In addition, there are some gender-specific side effects:

- **For men** – shrinking of the testicles, reduced sperm count, infertility, baldness, development of breasts, increased risk for prostate cancer.
- **For women** – growth of facial hair, male-pattern baldness, changes in or cessation of the menstrual cycle, enlargement of the clitoris, breast reduction, deepened voice.
- **For adolescents** – growth halted prematurely through premature skeletal maturation and accelerated puberty changes (remains short for the remainder of their life).

Street/Slang terms: Arnolds, Bulls, Gear, Gym Candy, Juice, Pumpers, Roids, Stackers, Weight Trainers.

For further information please contact the Drug Enforcement Administration – Newark Division Intelligence Group at 973-273-5260.