

Anabolic Steroids

- Anabolic steroids are drugs that imitate the effects of the natural male hormone testosterone.

Why are they used?

- The most common reasons people use anabolic steroids are to:
 - increase muscle mass
 - increase strength
 - train harder
 - reduce the recovery time needed after training.
- Some people believe the benefit from taking steroids is psychological, they make people feel that they are stronger or faster. Others believe that they make people feel more aggressive and so they are able to train harder.

What are the side effects?

There are a large number of side effects including:

- The development of acne.
- Disorders of the liver and kidneys causing jaundice, tumours and cysts.
- An increased risk of heart attacks and strokes.
- Mood swings and aggression.
- Disrupting the rate of growth in young people who have not reached their full height.
- In men it can cause:
 - infertility
 - shrinking of the testicles
 - the growth of breasts.
- In women it can cause:
 - deepening of the voice
 - growth of body hair
 - enlargement of the clitoris.
- Some side effects for women may not be reversible

Are steroids addictive?

- There have been a growing number of reports suggesting that anabolic steroids can cause addiction.
- Some people may need assistance when they want to stop using these drugs as they may experience withdrawal symptoms.

Ref: www.drugscope.org.uk