

# NOT A JUICEHEAD

## How to Say 'No' to Steroids

Many teens abuse steroids because they have friends, siblings, or teammates who use them. Others start using steroids because they don't know the risks—they don't understand how dangerous steroids really are. If someone offers you steroids, use the opportunity to set them straight on the facts:

**Your brother says:** "Doctors prescribe steroids all the time — how can they be illegal?"

**You say:** "The steroids that doctors prescribe aren't the same thing, and they're for people with health problems. They don't prescribe them to people who just want to be better at sports."

**A guy on your team says:** "Half the football team is on steroids."

**You say:** "Yeah, but they have nasty acne and they're not going to grow any taller if they keep it up."

**Your friend says:** "Steroids are safe. You don't even have to use a needle anymore—you can just take a pill."

**You say:** "But those pills have the same side effects. I don't want to be angry and depressed all the time."

# STEROIDS AND THE LAW

## Juicing Lands You in Jail

Steroid use isn't just dangerous, it's against the law. Unless you have a prescription, it's illegal to possess any anabolic steroid or other substance similar to testosterone that promotes muscle growth. Possession of steroids is illegal in every state and is prosecuted like "harder" drugs, such as cocaine and heroin.

Most cases are felonies and carry heavy consequences:

- Juvenile prison
- Probation
- Fines
- Community service
- Enrollment in a drug treatment program
- Suspension or expulsion from school
- Suspension of driver's license

Athletes who test positive for steroids will be ineligible to participate in sports for a period of time.



## CODY'S STORY

### Missing the Signs

Those who knew Cody described him as a polite guy who always had a smile on his face. The 16-year-old high school junior had everything going for him: he was popular, he was good-looking, and he was a star on his school's baseball team. He was even planning on going to college on a full athletic scholarship.

Like most high school students, Cody worried about his image. And when one of his coaches casually suggested that he try to put on some muscle, Cody took it to heart.

Cody didn't tell anyone when he started using steroids, but it was hard not to notice the changes. Cody bulked up and gained about 20 pounds that season. His parents and coaches thought that he'd just been working hard in the weight room. And it's true, he **had** been hitting the gym—that's where he met his steroid dealer.

But then the trouble started: Cody started flying into rages. He would scream at his parents and then tearfully apologize. He would pound the floor in anger, and once even hurt his pitching hand by punching it into the wall.

Things got worse from there—Cody beat up his girlfriend's former boyfriend, causing him to need stitches. He even started stealing money from his parents to pay for the next hit.

Then, just a few weeks after his seventeenth birthday, Cody committed suicide by hanging himself in his bedroom.

The police found vials of steroids, syringes, and needles in Cody's room. Several different kinds of anabolic steroids were found in Cody's body. The medical examiner stated that depression caused by steroid withdrawal symptoms were a likely cause of his suicide.

## WORK IT OUT!

Read the statements. Choose "True" or "False" to test your knowledge about steroids.

1. "Roid Rage" is just a myth.  
☐ True ☐ False
2. It's legal to purchase steroids from an authorized dealer.  
☐ True ☐ False
3. Taking steroids can weaken your bones.  
☐ True ☐ False
4. Extra testosterone isn't harmful to men.  
☐ True ☐ False
5. Steroids can cause men to grow breasts.  
☐ True ☐ False

Answers: 1) False 2) False 3) True 4) False 5) True

## STAY SAFE SERIES

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# STERIODS



## PUMPING POISON



# CHEATING YOUR HEALTH

## Big Sacrifices, Small Gains

You’ve been playing sports since you were a kid, and now that you’re in high school you know it’s important to work even harder. You want to compete in college, and there aren’t a lot of scholarships for your sport.

The trouble is, you’re also trying to balance your schoolwork with your intense practice schedule. You’re starting to feel burned out...on everything.

Then one of your teammates mentions that she’s been injecting herself with hormones to make her muscles stronger and to help them recover faster. She says it’s made her long workouts a lot easier.

You know that doing steroids is cheating, but you really want to get through the school year. And you really want that scholarship. So, you ask your friend to hook you up.

After a couple weeks of steroid use, you start to see a little more muscle tone, but your upper back is covered with small red acne. The skin on your face looks thick and greasy. You think you might even be losing your hair.

Then, the area around the injection site on your shoulder starts to swell up. It turns bright red and hurts so much that you can’t practice. Your coach makes you go to the doctor.

The doctor treats you for a bad infection, then tells you that it was caused by a dirty needle—she recommends that you get tested for HIV. Scared, you confess that you’ve been sharing steroid injections with a teammate.

Your doctor tells you that the steroids will probably cause scarring on your skin from the acne. She tells you that the hair loss could be permanent, and that if you continue to use, you might never be able to have children. She says she won’t tell your parents...as long as you stop using them.

A week later, the coach catches your friend injecting herself, and she gets kicked off the team. She’s not eligible for scholarships anymore—and she may have ruined her chances of being accepted to a good college. Your shoulder will heal—and your hair might grow back. But your friend has done permanent damage to her future.



# MUSCLES ON THE OUTSIDE, ILLNESS ON THE INSIDE

## Steroids and Your Body

Anabolic-androgenic steroids (AAS) go by a lot of different names: Juice, ‘roids, stackers, Arnolds, gym candy, pumpers...but they’re all man-made substances similar to the male sex hormone, testosterone.

Steroids stimulate muscle cells to produce more protein, which in turn creates more muscle tissue. More muscle tissue = bigger muscles.

So if steroids are made of testosterone, and testosterone is a hormone produced by the body, why are anabolic steroids so harmful?

Because hormones regulate most of the body’s functions—from digestion to liver function to emotional stability. And when you mess with your hormone levels, you’re messing with your bodily functions, too.

That’s why steroid use can cause short-term side effects like:

- Acne and oily skin
- Excess hair growth or loss
- Increased blood pressure and cholesterol
- Feelings of paranoia, jealousy, irritability, extreme mood swings, and aggression - more commonly known as “ROID RAGE.”

Guys who use steroids often experience effects like shrinking of the testicles and enlarged breasts. Girls who use steroids often develop facial hair and a deep voice. Steroids can also permanently disrupt a woman’s menstrual cycle, causing reproductive problems in the future. And all users are putting themselves at risk for serious health problems. The long-term effects of steroid use include:

- Increased risk of cancer
- Increased risk of liver and heart disease
- Weakening of the bones
- Abnormal enlargement of the heart
- Abnormal sexual development and infertility
- Increased risk of HIV and AIDS from needle sharing
- Stunted growth

# UNDER PRESSURE

## Reasons People Take Steroids

When most people think of steroids, they usually think of professional athletes taking them to boost performance. But the fact is that about half of anabolic steroid users don’t participate in competitive sports.

So if only a small number of people are actually taking steroids to be faster, stronger athletes, why are so many others taking them?

For many users, it’s all about pressure—pressure to look a certain way, or to feel stronger, or more muscular. Guys often start using steroids because they think they should be bulkier and have a deeper voice. Some women believe that using steroids will give them a better body and make them stronger. And many teens don’t know about the consequences of steroids.

If you want to increase muscle and strength, there are other ways to do it that are safe and legal:

- Eat a diet high in lean protein
- Strength train using weights
- Eat foods high in vitamin C to help promote muscle repair
- Swim laps and let the water resistance tone your muscles

# HOW TO SPOT A STEROID USER

## Signs of Anabolic Steroid Abuse

It’s pretty easy to spot someone who’s been juicing. The signs are written all over the body. Some of the signs of steroid abuse are:

- Unusually greasy hair and skin
- Severe red and purplish acne, often on shoulders and back
- Development of breasts in males
- Bad breath
- Thinning hair or receding hairline
- Drastic appetite shifts
- Complaints of joint pain
- Weight or muscle gain
- Extreme mood swings and aggressiveness

If you suspect that someone you know is using steroids, you need to treat it like any other drug. Talk to a trusted adult about your concerns.



# “CYCLING” IS ABUSE

## There’s No Safe Way to Use Steroids

Some people think steroids can be used safely if you use them the “right” way—but they couldn’t be more wrong.

Steroid “cycling”—or using steroids for short periods of time with long breaks in between—is just as dangerous as regular steroid use. The truth is, even if you only use steroids occasionally, you’ll still suffer the same short—and long—term side effects. But that’s not all—coming off steroids can cause even more problems.

When you take steroids, your body stops making its own testosterone. Once you stop using steroids, it takes a while for your body to start producing testosterone again. This is a big problem for both male and female steroid users.

This hormonal imbalance causes a deep depression that can lead to suicidal thoughts. Other possible side effects include:

- Increased fatigue and weakness
- Bone and muscle tissue loss
- Urinary problems
- Prostate problems
- Insomnia
- Osteoporosis