



Frequently Asked Questions

What are steroids?

Steroids are man-made drugs. They are prescribed when people produce low amounts of testosterone naturally or to remedy the loss of muscle mass due to diseases like AIDS.

Is the illegal use of steroids widespread?

Yes. More than a half-million U.S. high school students are believed to have used anabolic (muscle-building) steroids illegally. The fastest-growing segment is young women. Dosage often reaches hundreds of times what doctors prescribe for medical treatment.

Are they harmful?

When abused, they can lead to serious health problems, including liver and heart problems and cancer. They also can cause improper sexual development, emotional problems including 'roid rage, plus appearance problems including acne, oily skin and bad breath.

How do people get steroids?

Sadly, they are available illegally on the Internet, and can be shipped to your doorstep in the form of pills, cream and injections. There are cases where trainers, parents, coaches and black market dealers are believed to supply athletes.

Do they really enhance performance?

They create muscle mass – not performance. Training hard, eating well, and playing with attitude are what really improve performance.

What about human growth hormones?

Same story as steroids. They should only be medically prescribed and they don't improve performance. Many products are hyped but should be avoided.

Why do people use them?

Because they think they are getting a competitive edge. But steroids are not worth the risk. Beyond being illegal and causing unnecessary health issues, risks, they may cause you to injure joints, tendons, ligaments and bones.

Is it easy to test for steroids?

Yes, and testing is getting better. If you use steroids, you will get caught eventually. They can stay in your system for months.

What happens if I get caught?

Kiss your chances goodbye for playing at the next level. Collegiate and professional leagues and teams will suspend you. Plus, you could face penalties including fines and jail time.

What do I do if I am currently using steroids?

Confide in your doctor, and develop a plan to get off them.

What is the Play Clean program all about?

Dick Butkus, considered one of the greatest football players of all time, and his son Matt who played football for USC, formed this program to encourage high school students to Play Clean. They want fans, athletes, coaches and parents to join them by taking the Play Clean Pledge and speaking out for Playing Clean.

What is the goal of the Play Clean program?

To save lives and protect the health of our next generation. The Butkus family also believes the elimination of steroid use is critical to the future of organized sports.

What can I do to help?

Take the Play Clean pledge at www.iplayclean.org. Then, encourage athletes, educators, parents and coaches to take a stand with the Butkus family and you to bring an end to steroid use.