



Altered States

Anabolic Steroids



Roids, juice, stackers - these are some of the common street names for anabolic steroids, most commonly known in the world of professional sports and for weight training. Anabolic steroids can be prescribed to a person to combat the effects of diseases that result in loss of muscle mass, such as cancer and AIDS, but some athletes, bodybuilders, and others will abuse these drugs in order to enhance performance, or to improve their physical appearance. Steroids can

be taken orally, topically in a cream or gel, or injected directly into muscles. Athletes sometimes dose themselves between 10 and 100 times the normal prescribed amount to treat actual medical conditions, in order to rapidly boost the effect of their workouts and to improve healing times between them. Anabolic steroids work very differently from other drugs of abuse, since they do not have the same noticeable effects on the brain. The most important

difference is that steroids do not trigger rapid increases in dopamine, which is responsible for the rewarding “high” that drives the abuse of other substances, but the abuse of anabolic steroids may lead to aggression and other psychiatric problems.

Although many users report feeling good about themselves while on steroids, extreme mood swings are known to occur, including manic-like symptoms and anger, or “roid rage”, that may lead to violence. Researchers have observed that steroid abusers may suffer from: paranoid jealousy, extreme irritability, delusions, and impaired judgment stemming from feelings of invincibility.

In men, common side effects also include: shrinkage of the testicles, reduced sperm count/infertility, baldness, development of breasts, and an increased risk for prostate cancer. For women that abuse steroids, common effects may include: growth of facial hair, baldness, changes in the menstrual cycle, enlargement of the clitoris, and a deepened voice.