

Ten Negative Side-Effects of Taking Steroids

by

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1. *Heightened risk of injury.* Individuals who increase their level of muscular strength and size by taking anabolic steroids may be exposed to an elevated risk of injuring their tendons and ligaments. Such a risk is due in part to the fact that muscle tissue strengthens faster than connective tissue and to a degree the tendons and ligaments can't accommodate quickly enough.
2. *Unbecoming conduct.* Steroid use has been linked to increased levels of aggressive behavior. The extent of the impact that steroids have on an individual's mood and actions depends on a number of factors, including the type of anabolic steroids used, the size and frequency of the steroid doses, how long a person takes steroids, and how a person takes steroids (e.g., orally or by injection).
3. *Increased potential for heart disease.* Research has found that steroid use raises the cholesterol level in an individual's blood. Oral anabolic steroids have been shown to dramatically decrease the level of HDL-C (the "good" cholesterol) and increase the level of LDL - C (the "bad" cholesterol) in the blood, thereby substantially raising a person's risk of coronary heart disease.
4. *Beleaguered complexion.* Individuals who use steroids frequently suffer from acne. Steroids can cause an individual's oil glands to enlarge and secrete more frequently. In turn, the excess secretion can clog the pores of the skin, resulting in unsightly changes in a steroid user's complexion.
5. *Blood clots.* Steroids could cause the platelets in the blood to be more likely to stick together. By increasing the likelihood for the formation of blood clots, steroids increase a person's chances of having a heart attack resulting from a blood clot in the coronary arteries.
6. *Arrested development.* Adolescents who take steroids can experience premature closure of the epiphyseal (growth) plates. As such, taking steroids can cause children to have stunted growth.
7. *Liver toxicity.* Because the liver is the principle site for steroid clearance for individuals who take anabolic steroids orally, an excessive intake of steroids can be toxic to the liver. As a result, the liver can become vulnerable to serious damage, such as cysts and tumors. This damage can develop relatively rapidly after a person consumes a substantial amount of steroids, or it may develop gradually over a period of years as a result of prolonged consumption of small amounts of potentially toxic substances such as steroids.

8. *Hair today, gone tomorrow.* Steroid use may result in hair loss. For example, men prone to baldness may lose their hair faster. Concurrently (or separately), steroid users may also experience an increase in their level of body hair (in areas other than on their scalp).
9. *Temporary blanks.* Long-term anabolic steroid abuse has been associated with causing a man to have a diminished sexual desire. In addition to affecting a man's interest in sex, steroids can have an impact on his reproductive system in other negative ways, including causing his testicles to atrophy, lowering his production of sperm, and reducing the level of several of his essential reproductive hormones.
10. *Masculinizing effects.* Similar to their male counterparts, steroids have also been shown to have serious side-effects for women. For example, depending upon the frequency of use and dosage levels, taking steroids will cause most women to exhibit an enhanced level of male characteristics, including a deepening of the voice, an increase in the amount of facial hair, and the development of a more "manly" body shape. In addition, steroids can cause a woman's breasts to shrink and her menstrual cycle to be disrupted. In men, however, steroids can have a feminizing effect (e.g., the development of breast-like tissue).