

# STEROIDS | THE FACTS

ANABOLIC STEROIDS | ROIDS | GEAR | JUICE

## WHAT ARE ANABOLIC ANDROGENIC STEROIDS?

Performance and Image Enhancing Drugs (PIEDS) are substances that include anabolic androgenic steroids, hormones and peptides. PIEDS are usually used by people to help them improve their physical appearance and/or enhance muscle strength.

Anabolic-androgenic steroids (AAS) are the most common PIED used in Australia. The non-medical use of anabolic-androgenic steroids have increased over years.

## THE EFFECTS OF AAS

Using AAS may cause many negative physical and psychological side effects - some of these effects are even life-threatening. Luckily, most of the side effects are reversible if the individual stops taking the drug.

## EFFECTS FOR MALE AND FEMALES:

Facial and body acne	Personality Changes
Increased aggressiveness and possible violent behaviour	Jaundice (yellowing of the skin or eyes)
Decreased libido	High blood pressure
Psychosis	Abscess after injection
Depression	Sleeping problems
Stroke	Heart disease
Liver Damage	Cardiovascular complications

## EFFECTS FOR MALES:

Female-like breast enlargement	Enlarged clitoris
Reduced sperm count	Smaller testicles
Ejaculation problems	Sexual problems

## EFFECTS FOR FEMALES:

Masculinization	Enlargement of the prostate gland
Facial and body hair growth	Irregular periods
Deepened voice	Smaller breasts
Reduced fertility	Baldness

## LONG TERM EFFECTS

Liver Damage	Cardiovascular complications
High blood pressure	Tendon / ligament damage

## INJECTING AAS

Injecting steroids increases the risk for the transmission of infectious diseases such as human immunodeficiency virus (HIV), hepatitis B and C virus as well as increasing the risk of skin infections.

It is safest to never share injecting equipment. In WA, sterile injecting equipment is available from the Needle and Syringe Exchange Programs (NSEP).

## WITHDRAWAL

Withdrawal from AAS usually occurs when an individual develops dependence. Research suggests that there is a risk of developing AAS dependence for individuals who use multiple AAS in large doses simultaneously.

Long term use of AAS may lead to the development of a number of withdrawal symptoms including depression, insomnia and fatigue.

## QUITTING OPTIONS

People decide to quit using AAS for many reasons including experiencing harm to their physical and/or mental health and wellbeing, their relationships with friends and others they care about, or because they are starting new employment and may be drug tested.

Are you thinking about quitting your AAS use? Are you worried you may about the side effects? You are not alone. Help is only a phone call away.

You can call a confidential qualified alcohol and other drug counsellor at the Alcohol and Drug Support Line. The counsellors can assist in planning your quit attempt, and talk with you about the options available to assist you. You can call them 24/7 on (08) 9442 5000 or 1800 198 024 (country callers).