

ANABOLIC STEROIDS

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

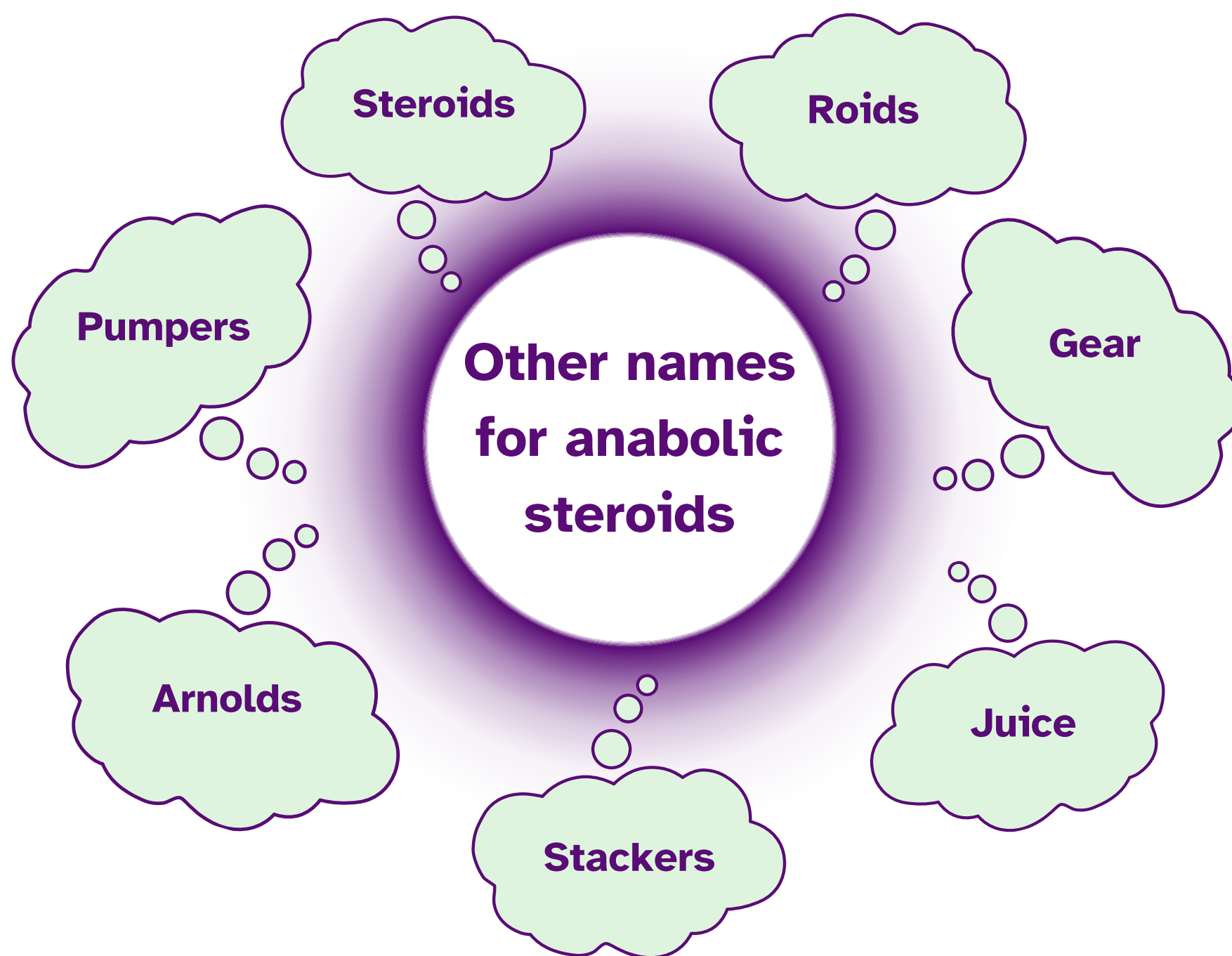
What are they?

Anabolic steroids are hormones



Anabolic steroids are a type of performance enhancing drug. They function like the natural male sex hormones (e.g., testosterone) in the body. Both professional and recreational athletes sometimes use them to improve their strength and physical appearance. They are often referred to as “steroids”.

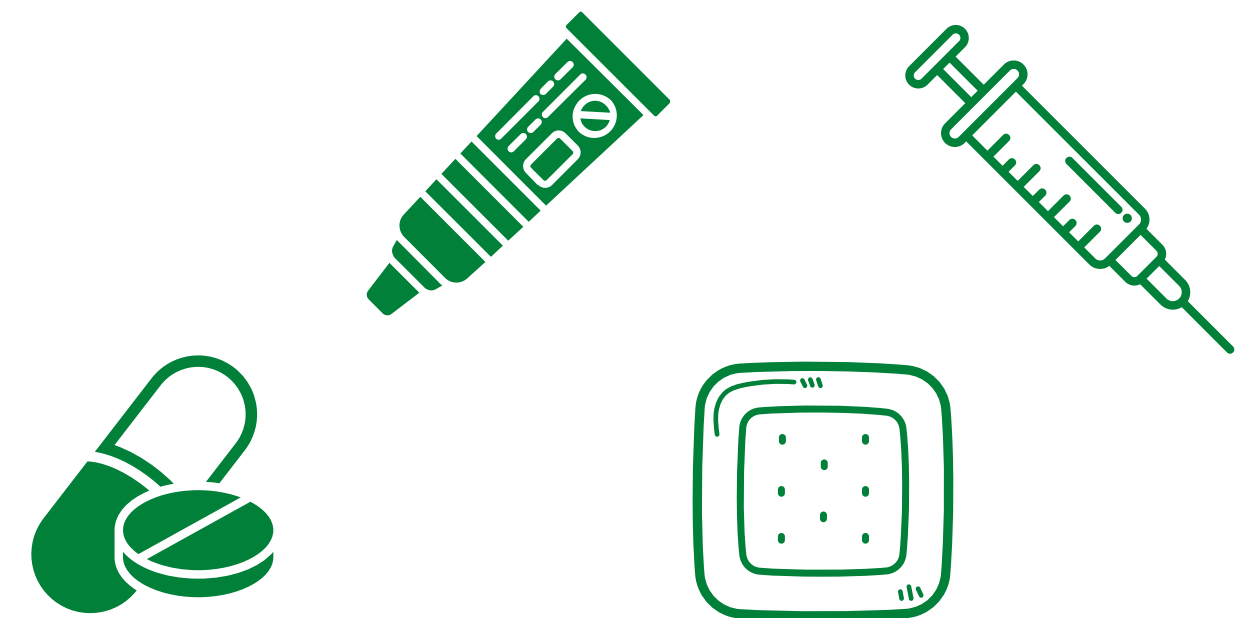
Anabolic steroids are made in a lab to be similar to testosterone. Many anabolic steroids (e.g., oxymetholone, nandrolone, boldenone) mimic the look and effects of testosterone.



How are they used?

Anabolic steroids can be taken orally, dissolved under the tongue, applied to the skin, used as a patch, or injected.

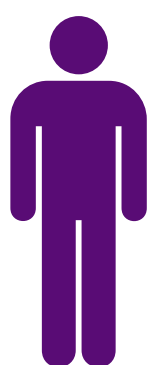
When injected, anabolic steroids are usually injected into the thigh or buttock.



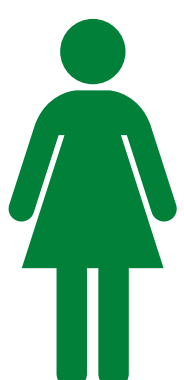
What are the effects?



Anabolic steroids may increase risky and aggressive behaviours (e.g., physical fights, violence, and mood swings).



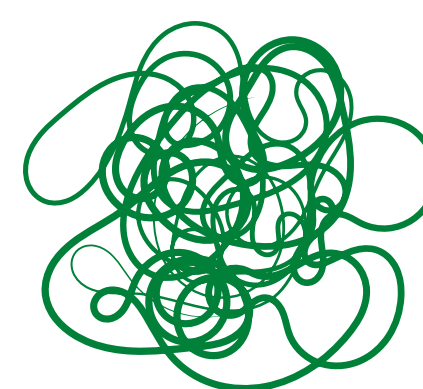
In males, anabolic steroids can cause shrinkage of the testicles, reduced sperm count, erectile dysfunction, and breast growth.



In females, steroids can cause increased facial hair, balding, reduced breast size, irregular periods, and deepened voice. These effects may not go away once steroids are stopped.



When people stop taking steroids they may experience severe depression, which may lead to suicide.



Anabolic steroids may cause dependence and addiction.



Long term use of steroids may damage organs, like the heart and liver. It may even increase the risk of certain cancers (e.g., prostate).

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When do you seek medical help?



Overdose or poisoning: Taking too much of an anabolic steroid, or combining steroids together. An acute overdose of anabolic steroids (i.e., taking at one time) is uncommon. Usually people experience chronic overdose when there is a build up of negative effects over time. If you do experience negative health effects from using anabolic steroids, contact a health care provider.

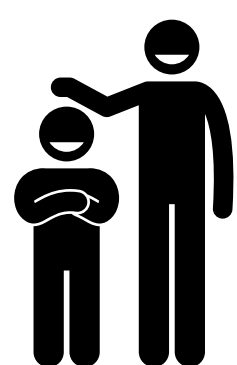
Signs: Extreme aggression or mood swings, delusions, irritability, and high blood pressure.

Get help! Slowly overdosing on anabolic steroids can be dangerous, so seek medical help. Chronic overdose may not seem like a medical emergency, but it can result in serious injury to a person's mental and physical (e.g., heart, liver, kidneys) health.

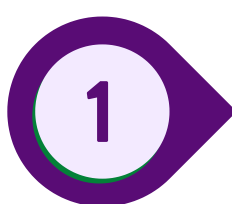
Did you know?

The chances of getting permanent side effects from anabolic steroids are higher if you use them before adulthood.

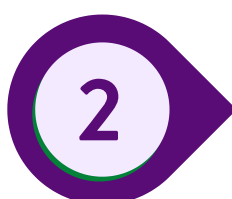
Side effects include early balding, stunted growth, and acne scarring.



How to stay safer



Not using steroids is the safest choice, though it may not be realistic for everyone.



Don't mix! Mixing steroids with other substances (e.g. alcohol) can greatly increase the risk of damage to organs-like the liver. Don't combine with other steroids (e.g., corticosteroids) as it can increase the negative effects of steroids.



Take breaks. Cycling steroid use instead of using them constantly lowers the risk of lasting side effects and mood changes.



Learn proper technique: Make sure you know how to safely inject in the muscle to avoid accidentally hitting a nerve.



Choose oral or topical. Using steroids orally or topically eliminates the risks associated with injecting. This will help prevent infection, illness, or injury associated with the injection.



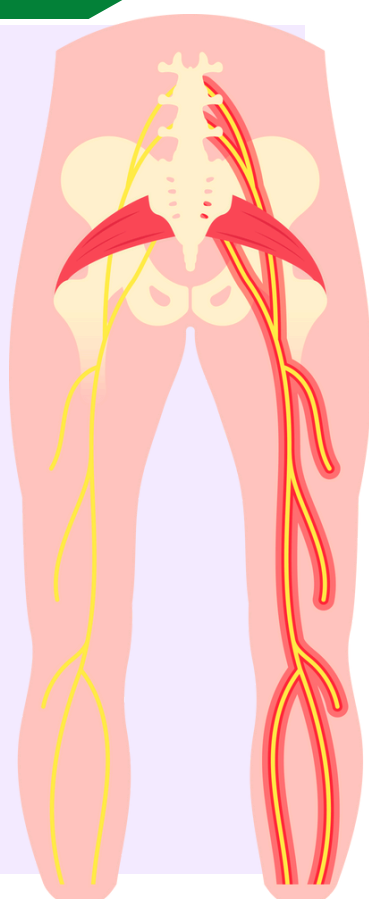
Keep it new: Infections such as Hepatitis can be passed through shared needles. New needles can be obtained at a pharmacy or through local organizations. For example, in NL you can contact SWAP at 709-757-7927.

Injection Risks!

Anabolic steroids are commonly injected in the gluteus muscle (the bum).

The **sciatic nerve** is close by, but the exact area can change depending on the individual.

Hitting this nerve can cause long lasting pain and numbness.



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