Steroids

Quick Facts
- Steroids promote muscle growth and the development of male sexual characteristics.
- Steroids are legally available only with a prescription.
- Steroids are prescribed to treat conditions such as delayed puberty, some types of impotence, and body wasting in patients suffering from AIDS.
- Steroids are abused to enhance athletic performance and to improve physical appearance.
- Steroids are available in tablet, liquid, gel, and cream form.
- Users commonly dose 10-100 times higher than used for medical conditions.

Consequences
- Users are vulnerable to more than 70 physical and psychological side effects which are irreversible.
- Steroid use most seriously injures the liver and the cardiovascular and reproductive systems.
- Those who inject the drugs expose themselves to the risk of needle-borne diseases, including HIV, hepatitis B and C and other bloodborne viruses.

Steroid abusers often exhibit the following symptoms
- Rapid weight gain
- Rapid muscle development
- Acne flare up
- Fluid retention
- Yellow tint in the eyes and on skin (jaundice)
- Mood swings, depression
- Aggressive behavior
- Premature balding

Short-term effects
- Use of steroids can increase muscle mass, strength, and endurance, but can also cause liver tumors, jaundice, water retention, and high blood pressure.
- Some users show bad judgment because the drug makes them feel invincible.
- Other users suffer from uncontrolled aggression and violent behavior called “Roid rage,” severe mood swings, manic episodes, and depression.
- They often suffer from paranoid jealousy, extreme irritability and can have delusions.
Long-term Effects

- When the body experiences a buildup of steroids in its system, conditions such as hypertension, high cholesterol, kidney disease, stunted growth, and heart damage are likely to occur.
- Women can experience irreversible deepening of the voice, shrinking of the breasts, menstrual irregularities, baldness, hair growth on other parts of the body, and genital swelling.
- Men can experience baldness, breast enlargement, sterility, shrinking of testicles and impotence.
- Steroids such as Prednisone and other synthetic steroids can cause a rise in blood sugar by blocking the effect of insulin.
- Over time users can develop diabetes.