

CLUE #4

Anabolic Steroids



While anabolic (which means “muscle-building”) steroids can be used to treat some medical conditions, they are often misused by athletes in an attempt to boost performance or improve their physical appearance.

Misuse of anabolic steroids leads to negative mental effects, such as:

- Paranoid (extreme, unreasonable) jealousy
- Extreme irritability and aggression (“roid rage”)
- Delusions—false beliefs or ideas
- Impaired judgment
- Shrinking testicles
- Decreased sperm count
- Baldness
- Development of breasts
- Increased risk for prostate cancer
- Stunted growth in teens

Anabolic steroids are very similar to the hormone testosterone. When a man takes steroids, his body thinks he has enough testosterone already, so it stops making its own testosterone. This is an example of a *negative feedback*. The effects of steroids can last for up to a year after a person stops using them.