ANABOLIC STEROIDS

I. About Steroids
- **Drug Class:** Schedule III Category
- Steroids are "illegal" to possess without a prescription from a licensed physician. It is illegal for individuals to sell steroids.
- More properly known as anabolic–androgen steroids (AAS) (testosterone and drugs that act like testosterone in the body).
- "Anabolic" refers to muscle–building and "Androgenic" refers to increased male characteristics.

II. Terms & Slangs
- **Steroids:** Arnies, Arnoldos, A’s, Anabolics, Bulls, Gears, Gym Candy, Hypes, Juicers, Pumpers, Roids, Stackers, Weight Trainers

III. How Is It Taken?
- There are three common forms in which anabolic steroids are administered:
  1. Oral
  2. Injectable
  3. Cream & Skin Patches
- Users often take steroids in patterns called "cycling," in which multiple doses of steroids are taken over a specific period of time, stopped for a period and started again. Many users also take different types of steroids in combination with other drugs. This is known as "stacking."

IV. "About The Buzz"
- Steroids do not cause a buzz immediately when they are taken because they don’t take action for hours.
- Both athlete and non–athletes abuse steroids in an attempt to enhance performance and/or improve physical appearance.
- After a typical "stacking regimen" lasting several weeks, some users report feelings of euphoria, great energy and increased combative/competitiveness.
- However, steroids can contribute to significant psychological issues. It is well documented that abuse of anabolic steroids can lead to aggression, depression, mania, violence and other adverse effects. (See V. Effects & Health Risks)
- For example, although many users report feeling good about themselves while on anabolic steroids, extreme mood swings can also occur, including manic–like symptoms that could lead to violence. Researchers have also observed that users may suffer from paranoid jealousy, extreme irritability, delusions, and impaired judgment stemming from feelings of invincibility.
- Anabolic steroids certainly meet the criterion of addiction – that users take them in the absence of medical need and despite knowledge of negative health consequences.

V. Effects & Health Risks
- Steroids Affect On Behavior:
  Steroids can make you angry and hostile for no reason. There are recorded cases of murder attributed to intense anger from steroid use – "roid rage."
- Steroids Affect On Body & Image:
  Steroids can cause acne, cysts, development of breasts in males, facial & body hair growth in women, abnormal liver functioning, male–pattern baldness, prostate enlargement, coarsening of the skin and testicular atrophy to name a few.
- Steroids Affect On The Heart:
  Steroids abuse has been associated with cardiovascular disease including heart attack and stroke. These heart problems can even happen to users under the age of 30.
- Steroids Increase Risk–Infection:
  Sharing needles or using dirty needles to inject steroids puts one at risk for diseases such as HIV/AIDS & Hepatitis.

For more information on Steroids, please visit:
- Above The Influence [www.abovetheinfluence.com]
- Association Against Steroid Abuse [www.steroidabuse.com]
- Substance Use & Mental Health [www.samhsa.gov]

* Project Towards No Drug Abuse Education Series Courtesy of Angel Colon and Stuyvesant High School’s SPARK Program

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