

Steroids: Worth the Risk?

by Michelle Laliberte

Steroids are a major topic of discussion and debate, especially with all the media coverage lately. Several of baseball's biggest stars—such as Mark McGwire, Barry Bonds, Jason Giambi, and Jose Canseco—have been accused of using steroids. Many people question whether Barry Bonds' home runs should count, especially if he was using a miracle muscle drug to help.

What do you think? Because major athletes are often role models for kids and adults alike, does it lessen their impact if their greatness came about by cheating?

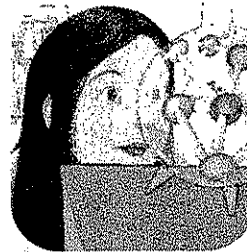
Kids as young as ten are using illegal bodybuilding drugs to improve their athletic performance as well. A government study from 2000 reported that an average of six out of one hundred twelfth-grade males had used steroids at least once. And they're not the only ones—the study also found that three of one hundred twelfth-grade females had tried them as well.

Nevertheless, even though competition in the athletic world is fiercer than ever, hard work and dedication are still the only safe ways to be the best. Take a look at the fol-

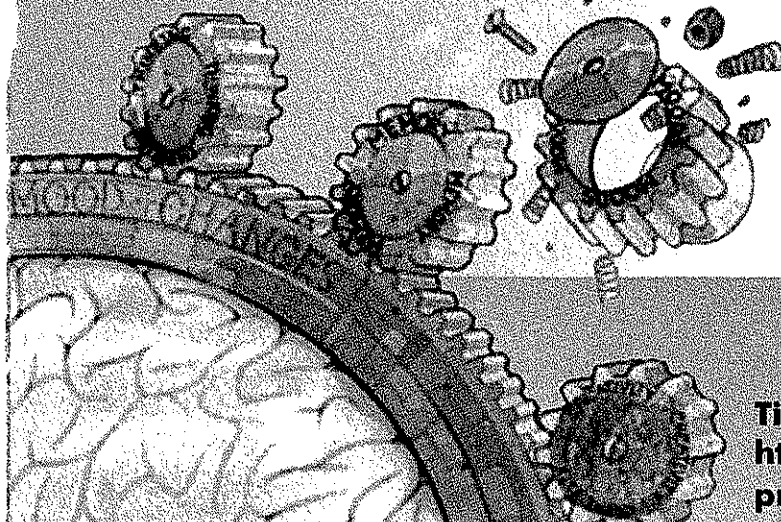
lowing websites to learn more about what steroids are, what kinds are out there, and whether you think the health and legal problems associated with using them are worth the risks.

National Institute of Drug Abuse InfoFacts: Steroids

<http://www.nida.nih.gov/Infofacts/Steroids.html>



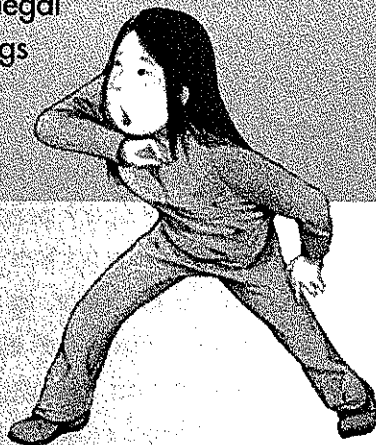
Steroids are man-made substances associated with the male sex hormones. These "fake" hormones regulate such important functions as voice, muscle size, and hair growth. However, messing with your body's internal workings can cause major problems such as liver and kidney tumors, cancer, and severe acne, along with many other not-so-cool issues. At the National Institute of Drug Abuse's website, you can log on to learn the facts about these illegal drugs and what health hazards are common among users.



Time for Kids: Baseball Under Fire
<http://www.timeforkids.com/TFK/news/printout/0,9187,1039596,00.html>

Kids Net AU Steroids
http://www.kids.net.au/kidscategories/Kids_and_Teens/Health/Substance_Abuse/Steroids

At this Australian site, not only can you find out which athletes have gotten caught abusing steroids but also what steroids can do to you. Click on to the "Anti-Doping" link, and you'll learn in English, Spanish, and even French why people use steroids, how they use them, and how you can tell whether someone is an abuser. Plus, the site contains other interesting articles discussing the illegal use of these drugs in worldwide sports.



Tired of hearing all the talk about steroid use among professional baseball players? Want to know what really happened at the Congressional hearing recently on steroid use? Read the *Time for Kids* website to find out which major sports figures testified and what they said. How do you think Major League Baseball commissioner Bud Selig should have handled the situation? What would you have done?

Oral Steroids

- Anadrol (oxymethalone)
- Oxandrin (oxandrolone)
- Dianabol (methandrosterolone)
- Winstrol (stanozolol)

Injectable Steroids

- Deca-Durabolin (nandrolone decanoate)
- Durabolin (nandrolone phenpropionate)
- Depo-Testosterone (testosterone cypionate)
- Equipoise (boldenone undecylenate)