

Illicit Drugs Factsheet

Anabolic Steroids

What are anabolic steroids?

Anabolic steroids mimic the effects of the male sex hormone testosterone. Testosterone plays a key role in the development of the testicles as well as promoting masculine characteristics such as a deeper voice, the growth of body hair and muscle mass.

The effects on muscle growth make steroids particularly attractive to athletes where strength, speed, and size may be of an advantage. It may also be tempting for athletes to use them to recover from injury more quickly.

For this reason anabolic steroids are prohibited both In and Out of Competition by the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA). The starting point for a sanction related to steroid use is a 4 year ban from all sport.

What are the risks?

The use of anabolic steroids has the potential to cause a number of harmful side effects including:

- Acne
- Increased risk of heart disease, cancer
- Liver and kidney damage
- Increased aggression
- Extreme mood swings ('Roid rage')

Male specific side effects:

- Breast growth
- Shrinking of testicles
- Decreased sperm production
- Impotence

Female specific side effects:

- Deeper voice, facial and body hair
- Enlarged clitoris
- Abnormal menstrual cycles
- Infertility



Other Considerations for Player & Athlete Support Personnel

- Steroids purchased over the internet or from other unknown or unregulated suppliers can be potentially fatal – they could be fake or mixed with other dangerous chemicals.
- In most countries, the possession or sale of anabolic steroids without prescription is a criminal offence.
- Importation of steroids or any prohibited substance including items carried in your personal luggage when traveling may also be considered a criminal offence and an anti-doping rule violation.
- Information resulting from the seizure of steroids or any prohibited substance at the border by Customs (including items purchased over the internet) will be passed to your National Anti-Doping Organisation to investigate as an anti-doping rule violation for attempted use. This may occur even if you don't physically receive the substances you paid for.

Anabolic Steroids - Status in Rugby

Banned in and out of competition



Illicit Drugs Factsheet

Cannabinoids (Cannabis)

What are Cannabinoids (Cannabis)?

Cannabinoids are one of the most commonly used illicit drugs and can be found within the dried flowers, leaves or resin of the Cannabis plant. Cannabis may also be known as marijuana, pot, hash, ganja, green or weed. It is most commonly smoked but can also be eaten.

Cannabis use is most commonly associated with recreational or social settings but regardless of the environment in which it is taken, if it is found in your system on Match day there are serious consequences.

Cannabinoids are listed on the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) Prohibited List and have been prohibited In-Competition in Rugby since 1 January 2004.

How does it affect the body?

The active ingredient in Cannabinoids, delta-9-tetrahydrocannabinol (THC) leads to feelings of euphoria and relaxation. Other effects on the body include:

- Impaired balance, co-ordination, concentration
- Slowed reaction time
- Impaired motor skills
- Drowsiness
- Dryness of mouth

Long term risks may include:

- Mood swings
- Feelings of anxiety or paranoia
- Memory impairment
- Chronic bronchitis
- Increased risk of lung, mouth, tongue, and throat cancer

How long does Cannabis stay in your system?

THC can be detected in the body up to several weeks after initial ingestion because it binds to the fatty tissue in the body where it is then released slowly. Clearance times may also be affected by the amount consumed, frequency of use, the potency of the Cannabis and how physically active the person is.

REMEMBER - a Player can test positive for Cannabis even if its use was in the days or weeks prior to a Match.

Cannabis - Status in Rugby

Banned in competition



What are Cannabinoids (Cannabis)?

Cocaine is extracted from the leaves of the Coca plant predominately found in South America and is one of the most addictive and abusive illegal drugs that exists. Its common names include Coke, Blow, Snow, Crack and Nose Candy. Cocaine can be eaten, injected and smoked, however insufflation or "snorting" is the most common method.

Cocaine is classified as a Non-Specified Stimulant and is prohibited In Competition only by the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA). The starting point for a sanction related to cocaine use is a 4 year ban from all sport.

How does it affect the body?

Cocaine directly affects the central nervous system by creating an intense high or sense of euphoria. The initial rush is shortlived and leaves addicts on a "downer" as it wears off.

Other short term effects on the body include:

- A loss of weight due to suppressed appetite
- Dilated pupils
- Increased temperature, heart rate and blood pressure
- Constricted blood vessels

Long term effects may include:

- Irregular heart beat
- Loss of memory and concentration
- Headaches and nausea
- Chest pain and respiratory problems
- Strokes and possible heart attacks

How long does Cocaine stay in your system?

Metabolites of Cocaine can be detected in the body several days after ingestion. The clearance times of this drug are affected by variable factors, such as the amount consumed, frequency of use, gender, age, purity of the cocaine and an individual's metabolism.

REMEMBER - a Player can still test positive for Cocaine even if it was used a few days prior to being tested.

Cocaine - Status in Rugby

Banned in competition





Illicit Drugs Factsheet

Ecstasy

What is Ecstasy

Ecstasy is a synthetic drug with psychedelic and stimulant effects better known to chemists as MDMA or 3,4-Methylenedioxymethamphetamine. It is most commonly found in tablet form and is often mixed with other toxic chemicals such as ephedrine, ketamine, cocaine, methamphetamine, caffeine and even rat poison increasing the potential health risk to unsuspecting users.

Ecstasy use is typically associated with night clubs and dance parties. However, regardless of the social environment in which it is consumed, there are serious consequences if it is detected in your system following a drug test.

Ecstasy is classified as a Specified Stimulant and is prohibited In-Competition only by the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA). The starting point for a sanction related to ecstasy use is a 4 year ban from all sport.

How does it affect the body?

Ecstasy directly affects the central nervous system by releasing chemicals such as serotonin and oxytocin. These create a sense of euphoria and restlessness, followed by a rapid comedown period.

Other short term effects on the body include:

- Increased energy and endurance
- Increased drive and motivation
- Decreased appetite
- Short term memory loss
- Urinary retention / dehydration
- Increased heart rate, body temperature
- Involuntary teeth grinding
- Blurred vision and nausea
- Severe anxiety, paranoia and depression

Long term effects may include:

- Clinical depression
- Low self-esteem and self-confidence
- Liver damage
- Impaired memory, learning and attention span
- Excessive wear of teeth
- Possible death

How long does Ecstasy stay in your system?

Ecstasy can be detected within the body for several days after ingestion. The clearance times of this drug are affected by variable factors such as the amount consumed, frequency of use, gender, age, purity of the Ecstasy and an individual's metabolism.

REMEMBER - a Player can test positive for Ecstasy even if its use was days before being tested.



Ecstasy - Status in Rugby

Banned in competition