The use of Anabolic Steroids in men’s recreational Fitness Training

ABSTRACT: Introduction: The aim of this study was to give general overview of using the anabolic steroids among the recreational sportsmen and at the same time to analyze other drugs used for immediate help to increase their individual fitness level.

Materials and Methods: The questionnaire has been used to investigate the potential abuse of anabolic steroids among the recreational sportsmen, practicing non–competitive fitness training at the intermediate level 3 to 4 times per week. Randomly selected 80 men (21.6±3.4 years) from various fitness centers were asked to fulfill the questionnaires anonymously. 80% (64) of questionnaires were returned.

Results: The most significant finding of our study: use of anabolic steroids has been determined by 21% of all respondents; any of anabolic users use the drugs without any professional medical supervision; 36% of present anabolic users are decided to use drugs again in case of harder physical activity or fatigue; 36% of present non-users are decided to use the anabolics in case of physical performance; majority of information on anabolics effects is reached from professional athletes and “unofficial distributor” and common use of anabolics and stimulation drugs without any medical supervision.

Discussion: The results of this study should alert to solve the dynamic expansion of anabolics abuse and evaluate the well-known use of anabolics and stimulation drugs to improve physical.

Keywords: Anabolic Agents, Steroids, Physical Fitness.

Correspondence to:
Comenius University, Faculty of Physical Education and Sports - L.Svobodu 9 - 814 69 Bratislava - Slovakia

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The problem of using anabolic steroids by top-level athletes has been widely discussed at medical, ethical, behavioral and experimental levels for at least 20 years. Drug testing, strict policies and enforcement, and educational programs have continued to be the main responses to the problem. Despite this, drug abuse in competitive sport continues to be pervasive. Numerous explanations have been given for this and the reason range from performance enhancement to relieving stress and boredom. However the use of anabolic steroids in recreational sports and fitness is quiet new, and any relevant data is missing. Apart from a few selected case studies, a relative dearth of information has been provided concerning the subjective experience of people using anabolic-androgenic steroids.

**Aim of the study**

The aim of this study was to give general overview of using the anabolic steroids among the recreational sportmen and at the same time to analyze other drugs used for immediate help to increase their individual fitness level. The benefits or adverse of this phenomenon is generally well known, but not discussed by specific conditions in recreational sport.

In our study we also tried to find out the level of information about the effect of supportive drugs in sportmen, and the sources when they come from.

**MATERIALS AND METHODS**

**Approval**

This study was approved by the Ethics Committee of the Faculty of Pharmacy, Comenius University - Bratislava, under the No 659/2006.

**Characterization of the study**

The questionnaire has been used to investigate the potential abuse of anabolic steroids among the recreational sportmen, practicing non–competitive fitness training at the intermediate level three to four times per week. Randomly selected 80 men (21.6±3.4 years) from various fitness centers were asked to fulfill the questionnaires anonymously. 80% (64) of questionnaires were returned.

Questions were divided into four groups and concerned following topics:

1. Health state and basic somatometrical parameters, periodicity and length of performed sport activities
2. Presence and frequency of drugs use between athletes
3. Information on expected “positive” actions and possible side effects of used anabolic steroids
4. Evaluation of noticed effects of anabolic steroids use by anabolic users themselves.
RESULTS

Somatometrical parameters and health status of anabolic steroids users

As expected, the comparison of somatometrical parameters has shown that the average Body Mass Index in anabolic steroids users was significantly higher than in non-users: 27.9±2.1kg.m⁻² and 22.3±2.7kg.m⁻², respectively.

Analysis of health status of anabolic users is shown in Table 1.

DISCUSSION

Use of anabolic steroids for their proteoanabolic effect

The results (Figure 1) has shown that 21% persons involved in our investigation has used anabolic steroids like stanosol, testosterone, derivates, superanaboline, andriol, sustanone, nandrolon, and metandrostolone, 18% used drugs parallel together with some other kinds of pre-scribed pharmacotherapy.

In all cases of recreational sportsmen, anabolic steroids were used for their proteoanabolic effect without any medical control, supervision or consultation. Therefore, all steroids were obtained from unofficial sources. 63% of our respondents used drugs for a limited period of time as a test, 9% used them regularly. One of the most significant facts is that 36% subjects are open to use steroids in the future. Conversely, only 27% claimed not to use steroids again. Additionally, 72% of all respondents have confirmed knowledge of positive and unwanted effects.

The information about drugs and anabolic steroids sources

As it is shown in Figure 2 the most information came from professional athletes (81%), magazines (72%), and unofficial distributors (63%). None of recreational sportsmen took the drugs with at least little information about it.

Contrary, unofficial distributors are the most frequent source for buying the steroids (90%).

Expected and side effects of anabolic steroids

The most frequent expected effects by taking the anabolic steroids are increase of physical performance (100%) and decrease of fatigue (81%). Then, as it is shown in Figure 3 the reason for using the drugs are as follows:

- Reduce of joint mobility soreness: 54%
- Improvement of psychical resistance: 27%
- Moodiness: 27%
- Feeling of unforeseen fatigue: 18%
- Improved euphoria feelings: 9%
- Decrease of headache: 9%

Despite of knowledge of negative side effects, 36% respondents are decided to use next dose of anabolics in case of hard physical activity.

The most significant finding of our study

1. Use of anabolic steroids has been determined by 21% of all respondents. Any of anabolic users use the drugs without any professional medical supervision.
2. 36% of present anabolic users are decided to use drugs again in case of harder physical activity or fatigue.
3. 36% of present non-users are decided to use the anabolics in case of physical performance.

Table 1 - Health status of anabolic steroids users

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Health problems</th>
<th>% of anabolic steroids users</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Motion organs pain</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regular headache</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regular fatigue</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 1 - Use of anabolic steroids for their proteoanabolic effect

Figure 2 - The information about drugs and anabolic steroids sources

- Improvement of psychical resistance: 27%
- Moodiness: 27%
- Feeling of unforeseen fatigue: 18%
- Improved euphoria feelings: 9%
- Decrease of headache: 9%
4. Majority of information on anabolics effects is reached from professional athletes and “unofficial distributor”

5. Common use of anabolics and stimulation drugs without any medical supervision.

On the base of our investigation we conclude that the level of information about either the wanted or most importantly, the negative effects of drugs among potential users in non-competitive fitness training is very low. We suggest to clearly open the problem of using anabolic androgenic steroids in this area.

The results of this study should alert to:
- solve the dynamic expansion of anabolics abuse
- evaluate the well-known use of anabolics and the stimulation regarding the use of drugs to improve physical performance at recreation level.

**REFERENCES**


