

Anabolic Steroids

What are anabolic steroids used for?

Anabolic–androgenic steroids (AAS) are man-made drugs that are similar to the male hormone testosterone. Most steroids are injected. Some steroids may be taken by mouth.

Healthcare providers sometimes prescribe steroids to:

- Treat men who cannot make enough testosterone naturally
- Increase weight gain in people with certain problems or disorders (such as AIDS)

Some athletes use AAS to build muscle and improve performance. However, AAS can have many serious side effects.

How do they work?

Anabolic steroids increase the body's ability to make proteins and build them into muscle tissue. Combined with a high protein diet, AAS will increase muscle mass and body weight.

What else do I need to know about this medicine?

- Steroids are only legal in the US if you have a healthcare provider's prescription. Steroids that are purchased without a provider's prescription may not be safe.
- AAS are not legal in organized sports. Many professional sports ban steroids and regularly test athletes for them. Athletes who test positive for steroids will be suspended or disqualified.
- Follow the directions that come with your medicine, including information about food or alcohol. Make sure you know how and when to take your medicine. Do not take more or less than you are supposed to take.
- Try to get all of your prescriptions filled at the same place. Your pharmacist can help make sure that all of your medicines are safe to take together.
- Keep a list of your medicines with you. List all of the prescription medicines, nonprescription medicines, supplements, natural remedies, and vitamins that you take. Tell all healthcare providers who treat you about all of the products you are taking.
- Many medicines have side effects. A side effect is a symptom or problem that is caused by the medicine. Ask your healthcare provider or pharmacist what side effects the medicine may cause and what you should do if you have side effects.

If you have any questions, ask your healthcare provider or pharmacist for more information. Be sure to keep all appointments for provider visits or tests.

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