

Informative Speech

Can you imagine going to the doctor for a routine visit and being asked if you are happy with your height or size? Through hormone stimulation, this has recently become something that can be changed if someone is not satisfied with their development. With the ability to contract and produce anabolic steroids along with human growth hormones at a marketable level, doctors are now able to provide patients with drugs that can assist the growth process. The use of these types of drugs has become an issue in the media due to athletes using these drugs to give themselves an edge in their respective fields. I will describe what these drugs actually do, along with their adverse effects, and why sports figures have become a target for these human growth hormones.

Anabolic steroids are a derivative of the male hormone testosterone. The main use of steroids is to increase muscle mass and strength along with decreasing the amount of fat tissue in the body. In athletes the strength gain has been recorded between a 5 and 20 percent increase in muscle mass. However, there are multiple side effects that occur from taking steroids. Most commonly athletes have reported an increase in body acne along with an increase in body hair. It is widely known that aggressive behavior can be a result of steroid use, but depression can occur following withdrawal from the drug due to user dependency. The body can physically become dependent on anabolic steroids as well since they are derived from testosterone. The body's usual production of the hormone slows down due to the outside exposure to the drug. The question becomes for athletes whether the potential increase in performance means more to them than the laundry list side effects that can result from taking the drug. We have seen how steroids can affect the body, now we will take a look at the human growth hormone.

The human growth hormone naturally occurs in the pituitary gland and was discovered in the 1920s. However, it was not able to be extracted until the 1950s. This hormone became useful in treating people with dwarfism due to its ability to jump start the growth of bones and muscles. Another application for HGH was treating aging senior citizens. It was found to reduce fat, increase skin thickness, bone density, and also improve the liver and spleen. Athletes and others who have been known to abuse the drug have done so to increase muscle size and tone. Since it is a growth hormone and is used to increase bone size and density, this affect also occurs with those who abuse the drug. This can cause for an increase in the jaw size which gives drug users an ape-like appearance. Since this is a natural hormone that is produced in the body the effects of the drug are more permanent than anabolic steroids due to the fact that they increase the hormone production even though the user could have stopped taking the drug.

Recently scandals have arisen in multiple sports about the use of anabolic steroids and HGH. This is due to the fact that the potential earning that comes with success in major sports makes athletes want to be the best in order to earn a higher salary. There are often incentives in contracts that athletes sign that allows them to earn bonuses for hitting a certain amount of home runs, rushing for a certain amount of yards, along with other achievements. The money that teams and companies are willing to pay athletes who perform at a certain level is worth millions and for certain players has outweighed the adverse effects of the drugs for them. The reason that drug use in sports has become such a controversial issue is that athletes that use these drugs no longer are on the same level as the rest of the players. Also with records being broken in this steroid era people feel that the sanctity of sports records has been tainted and that some of the record holders are

not deserving of their place in history. The message that this drug use sends to athletes in middle school and above is the main concern of society. People feel that children should not have role models who are cheating in their sport just to earn more money. League commissioners have been trying to make drug testing harder with harsher punishments, but the damage to the sports world has been done.

Human growth hormones and steroids have their purpose in the world, but unfortunately they are most commonly used by athletes who abuse the drug for fame and fortune. Along with steroids and HGH, there are a few other drugs that are abused by athletes today, but these two are the most used. This problem has recently become more public and in the near future hopefully these drugs will be used strictly for their medical purpose for those who can benefit from them, rather than by athletes who use them to gain more recognition.