

One In 20 Youth Has Used Steroids For Bulking Up

According to a new study from Minnesota, anabolic steroids have been used by about five percent of middle and high school students to bulk up or put on muscles.

The findings of the study were published in the journal *Pediatric*. It was revealed that more than one-third of boys and one-fifth of girls in the study remarked that they had made use of protein powder or shakes for gaining muscle mass and non-steroid muscle-enhancing substances, such as creatine were used by five and 10 percent of the study participants.

Dr. Linn Goldberg, from Oregon Health & Science University in Portland, remarked that these trends can be attributed to the pressure to start making the use of [anabolic steroids](#) in high school and said the influence of older teens in high school is a big contributor as they can have great influence as one progresses into the next stage of his or her athletic career.

It is important that healthy alternatives to build muscles are given to teenagers, said Goldberg, co-developer of the ATLAS and ATHENA programs to prevent steroid and other substance use on high school teams. Getting enough protein through food, eating breakfast and avoiding muscle toxins like alcohol and marijuana can be useful for young athletes to get stronger, said Goldberg.

The new data came from approximately 2,800 kids and teens at 20 different middle and high schools in the Minneapolis/St. Paul area. Students during the 2009-2010 school year completed a survey on food and weight-related behaviors, including activities tied to muscle gain. The majority of children surveyed were poor or middle-class.

The study also revealed that almost all of them had indulged into at least one activity for muscle building in the past year, most often they were working out more to get stronger. One-third of kids and teens used steroids and other muscle-building substances or overdoing it on protein shakes, dieting, and weight lifting. This study also revealed that the use of anabolic steroids was equally common among athletes and non-athletes though student-athletes were more likely than their peers to use most methods of muscle building.

The study also revealed that Asian students were three to four times more likely to have used anabolic steroids than white students in the past years. It was noted by lead researcher Marla Eisenberg from the University of Minnesota in Minneapolis and her colleagues that most Asians in the study were Hmong. According to the researchers, this study shows higher adolescent use of steroids and other muscle-boosting substances than most other recent research and "is cause for concern."

The synthetic versions of testosterone (the male sex hormone), anabolic steroids are legally prescribed for treating health conditions such as hormone deficiency or muscle loss but they are typically used in much higher doses for non-medical purposes, according to the [National Institute on Drug Abuse](#).

In the last few years, steroids have become pervasive in professional sports, including baseball, football, and boxing. Meanwhile, erythropoietin or EPO is slowly and steadily gaining popularity and was behind

the Lance Armstrong cycling controversy that caused the cyclist to be stripped of all his Tour de France titles and get banned for life.