

Increasing Number Of Men Are Afflicted With Bigorexia

Colin Tyrie, public health advisor at Manchester Mental Health NHS Trust, has issued a warning of an off-the-scale demand for '[bodybuilder drugs](#)' in Greater Manchester. Last year, police made 1,488 seizures of steroids across the region that is almost double the previous year's total of 799.

The 'needle shots' of [anabolic androgenic steroids](#) can be made for as little as £2 and use of these drugs is extending well beyond amateur and professional bodybuilders. In the last few years, steroid use has been greatly associated with police officers, builders, and security guards. A NHS-run Pump Clinic in Ancoats that provides advice on anabolic steroids and operates a needle service for ensuring that the drugs are used safely have about 600 steroid users on the books. The NHS-run Pump Clinic is now seeing athletes from rugby, cycling, and young actors.

It is believed by some experts that men drawn to anabolic steroids could be suffering from 'Adonis body syndrome' or 'Bigorexia'. [Bigorexia](#) (also known as Muscle dysmorphia or Reverse anorexia) is a disorder in which an individual becomes obsessed with the illusion that he or she is not muscular enough. The use of steroids in long-term or steroid abuse (or overdosing) can be associated with the development or aggravation of side effects like hair loss, acne, and shrunken testicles. Steroid abuse can also be a reason behind problems with the liver, heart, kidney, and fertility. Use of injectable steroids through shared needles can increase the possibility of contracting HIV and Hepatitis B and C.

Tyrie remarked the 'trickle' of people coming to the clinic has become a torrent due to the growing pressure on young men to have a 'good' physical appearance. The health expert expressed fears that the new market for anabolic androgenic steroids may create health problems and remarked when they were really easily accessible but with a smaller demand, we tended not to get a lot of problems with them. Tyrie added that the people who were using them knew a bit more about it and they researched them to an extent and they were generally athletes or body builders. He said now it's gone off the scale with people doing it for emerging reasons and they might be less inclined to do the research required. Tyrie added the male role in society has become quite damaged and it is not sure what it is any more. The public health advisor added that men don't have an identity like our fathers did so there's this sense we're trying to fulfill that. He went on to add that there is quite a strong prevalence of this amongst white working class males and it is a quick way to get prestige to say 'yes I'm a big bloke' and all the associations that go with that.

Tyrie said further study was needed to understand the long-term effects of anabolic steroids and also remarked if there is a ticking health time-bomb, we are pushing users away by criminalizing them more and more and that is what is happened in the past with drugs.