

UK Government Advisors Urge Online Steroid Imports To Be Banned

The Advisory Council on the Misuse of Drugs (ACMD), the expert group of UK drug advisors, is pressing for a ban on online imports of [anabolic androgenic steroids](#) amid concerns over their use by teenage boys and young men to improve body image.

ACMD said the ban is required as anabolic steroids that are sold online are often out of date, contaminated, or delivered with wrong dosage instructions. Professor Leslie Iversen, the chairman of ACMD, remarked anabolic steroids were now much too easily available. Iversen said you can see endless offers if you search online and added that the ACMD is the lone voice against this tide of promotion on the internet.

Iversen also added we think an import ban on steroids would have a considerable dampening effect on demand but did admit that it may be difficult to enforce such a ban but it would act as a simple deterrent. The chairman of ACMD also said there is no question that the number using the drug for sporting reasons is now a minority and the real growth has come in young users who want to improve their body image. Iversen concluded by saying anabolic steroids were becoming a "big phenomenon" in Britain.

Iversen also said [misuse of steroids](#) carries significant risks while the health-related harms associated with these substances are not as severe as with some other drugs, especially for young people whose bodies are still developing. The ACMD chair added more needs to be done to tackle the supply of anabolic steroids and to educate people to the potential dangers.

A recently concluded ACMD report to the home secretary on anabolic steroids quoted the latest figures from the British Crime Survey. It was estimated that anabolic steroids have been used by 50,000 people in the last year for non-medical purposes like [bodybuilding](#). The British Crime Survey was told more than 220,000 had used anabolic steroids. According to drug experts, these are very much underestimates of the number of people who are using steroids as a majority of steroid users would not openly admit to using such performance enhancing drugs even in an anonymous self-report survey such as the British Crime Survey. According to the report, some syringe and needle exchange programs for problem drug users also reported a dramatic rise in steroid injectors.

The Advisory Council on the Misuse of Drugs (ACMD) said steroids should remain a Class C illegal drug that can be purchased from a pharmacist. It is presently legal to possess or import anabolic steroids as long as they are for personal use only while it is illegal to import or sell

steroids for non-medical purposes. The drug advisory body said it is time that steroids should be made illegal to order substances online from overseas websites and import them by post or courier. However, personal possession of steroids that would include bringing them into the country would stay legal as it is believed by authorities that problem would be pushed underground by criminalizing users.

The ACMD report revealed that only a small number of deaths have ever been attributed to liver damage associated with use of anabolic steroids for a long term. It was further added that most of the harmful effects of steroids are not life-threatening in nature. However, the report raised concerns about use of steroids by young people as the drugs can disrupt the normal pattern of physical growth and can stimulate masculinizing effects in women and children.

The drugs minister, James Brokenshire, said we will carefully review the recommendations set out in this report and respond shortly.