

Emerging Trends in IPED use and Associated Harms



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Overview

- About Me
- Categories, Legal Status and Availability of IPEDs
- Motivations for IPED Use
- Commonalities with Other Drugs
- Risk Periods and Transitions
- Harm Associated With IPED Use
- Services for IPED Users
- Couched with Changes in the Preceding Three Years

About My Research

- Thesis entitled: Psychosocial Factors Influencing the Harmful Use of PIED in Sport and Exercise
- Data collection undertaken in four phases
- Study 1: Exploratory Qualitative Study to Identify the Subjective Experience of IPED Users Understanding of IPED Related Harm
- Study 2: Develop a Quantitative Measuring Instrument Based on the results of Study 1
- Study 3: Cross Sectional Medium Scale Quantitative Study to Investigate Psychosocial Processes Underpinning Harmful IPED Use
- Study 4: Longitudinal Study Designed to Examine the Directional Effects of Moral Disengagement of IPED use and Harm

Categories of IPEDs

- **Anabolic Androgenic Steroids (AAS):** Oral & Injectable
Dianabol, Winstrol, Testosterone, Nandrolone (Deca) etc.
- **Ancillary Drugs:**
Aromatase Inhibitors, Dopamine Receptor Antagonists
- **Peptides:**
Growth Hormone Releasing Peptides (GHRPs) Human Growth Hormone (HGH),
Insulin
- **Post Cycle Therapy (PCT):**
Human Chorionic Gonadotropin(HCG), Tamoxifen (Nolva), Clomiphene
Citrate (Clomid)
- **Weight Loss Drugs:**
Thyroid Hormone (T3), Clenbuterol (Clen), 2-4-Dinitrophenol (DNP)

Legal Status & Availability of IPEDs

- Legal to possess for personal use: illegal to import, supply and/or manufacture (without license)
- Prior to 2012 the supply chain for IPEDs was much smaller
- Steroids were considered to be of higher quality sourced from overseas pharmacies
- The influence of the London 2012 Olympics
- Changes to importation laws
- Rise in Underground Labs (UGLs)
- Gym dealers, websites, social media

Websites

[SOURCES](#)[LABS](#)[PRODUCTS](#)[CYCLES](#)[PICS](#)[FORUMS](#)[MGC](#)[ADD](#)[Steroids](#) [Supps](#)[All](#) [US](#) [UK](#) [EU](#) [CA](#) [AU](#) [Other](#)

| | | | |
|-----|-------------------------------------|-------|--------|
| 1. | supps.to ✓ | 99.31 | ★★★★★★ |
| 2. | daddyroids.com ✓ | 99.29 | ★★★★★★ |
| 3. | alphamuscle.is ✓ | 99.10 | ★★★★★★ |
| 4. | roidbazaar.net ✓ | 98.63 | ★★★★★★ |
| 5. | osgear.is ✓ | 97.98 | ★★★★★★ |
| 6. | decatest.net ✓ | 97.78 | ★★★★★★ |
| 7. | musclestrong.net ✓ | 97.64 | ★★★★★★ |
| 8. | musclerapid.com ✓ | 97.19 | ★★★★★★ |
| 9. | gear4gym.com ✓ | 97.19 | ★★★★★★ |
| 10. | alphaomegalabs.co ✓ | 96.90 | ★★★★★★ |

Great products from proroid. I've ordered from them for the last two years and always get the best gear from them I went for 165 to 225lbs with their gear. I love it



Mikematch on [pro-roid.net](#)

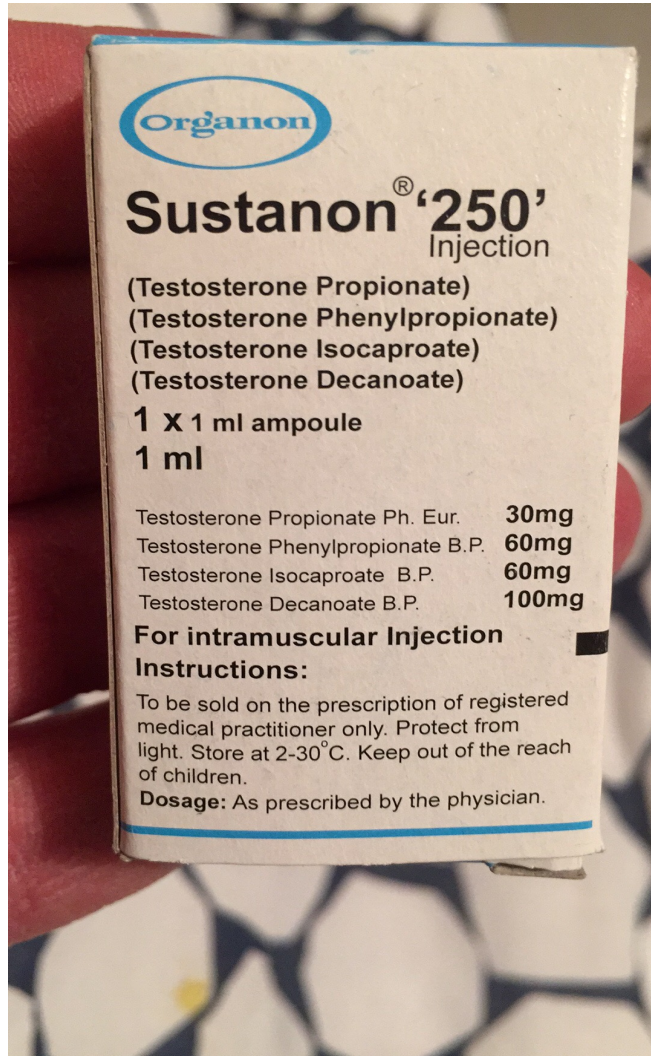
1915 Steroid Sources

7997 Steroid Products

642 Steroid Labs

22647 Reviews

Gym Dealers: My First Day in Birmingham



Social Media



Who Uses IPEDs: Motivation for Use

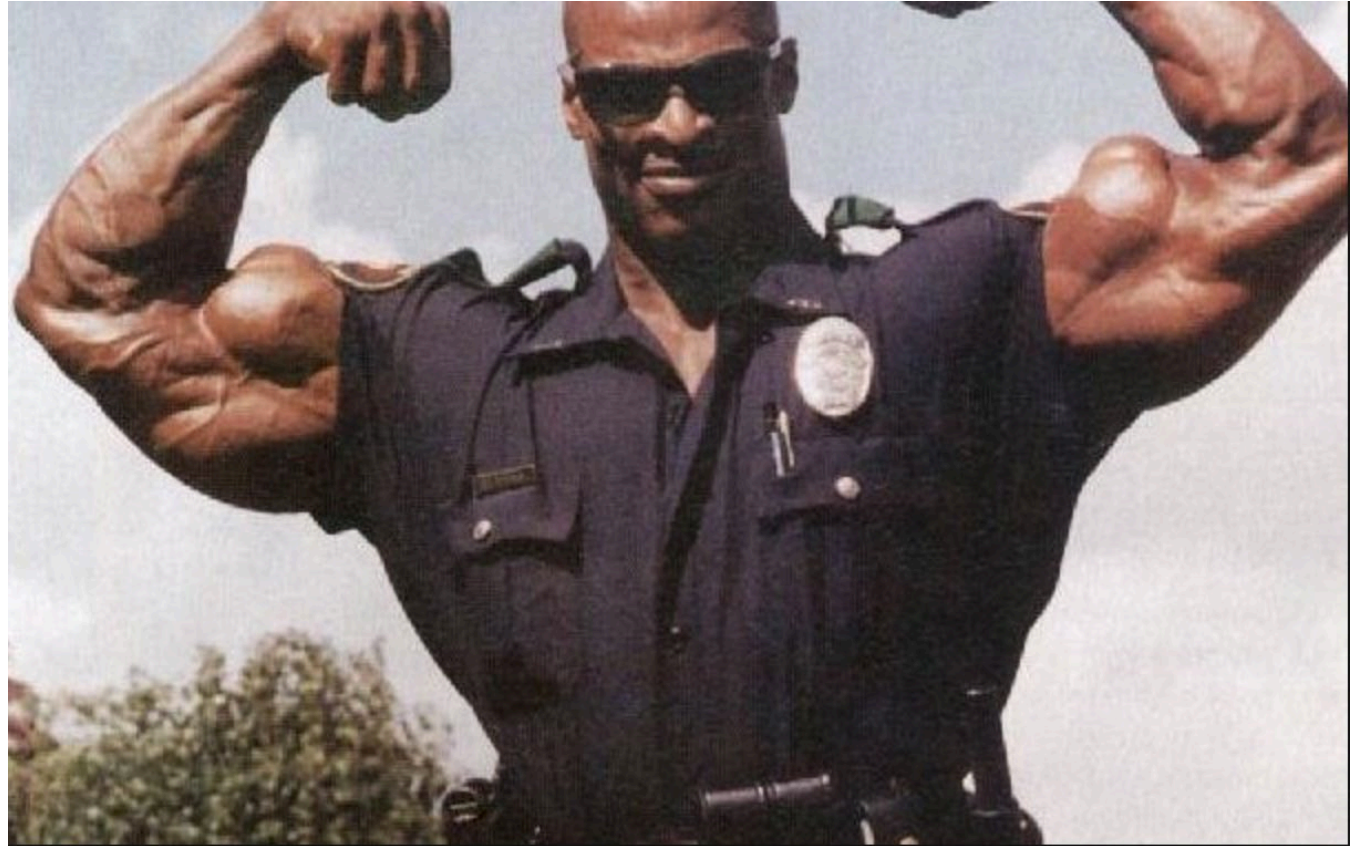
- 70s & 80s AAS Use Became Evident in Recreational Gyms
- Use Increased Incrementally: Since 2012 Use Appears to have Increased Significantly
- Occupation
- Sport Specific
- Image/Appearance
- Bodybuilding/Strength Athletics
- Lifestyle
- Childhood Trauma
- Self Confidence
- Various Other Reasons: All Have One Commonality – Change!

Similarities with other Drugs

- Supply Markets
 - Cocaine → Crack → Methamphetamine
 - Testosterone → Trenbolone → Methyltrienolone
 - ECA Stack → T3/Clen → DNP
-
- IPED Users
 - Supplements → Oral Cycles → Injectable Cycles
 - Transition to from Steroid User to Problematic Steroid User

Risk Periods: Transition From Non-User to IPED User to Problematic IPED User

- Supplement Use
- Breaking Through Platues
- Culture
- Physical Injury
- Life Transitions
- Relationships Ending
- Employment
- Mental Health Problems
- Polydrug Use



Results: Supplement Use

- 'Kevin' 20

I was taking my training seriously ... using a lot of supplements, they were costing a fortune. I was taking up to 40 supplements a day ... Then I started talking to other guys at the gym, they said the supp's were useless and I should do a d'bol cycle ... that was it for me! I was hooked ... I didn't come off cycle for four years

- Drug trend theme: Gateway Hypothesis? The transition period from supplement use to steroid use is reducing. Age of onset decreasing estimates suggest 25-30% begin using in teenage years

Culture & Breaking Through a Plateau:

- 'Rob' 22

A lot of guys I knew at the gym were using. I was pushing 110kg on the bench press ... feeling like an sissy while others were loading 200kg for reps .. I decided to run a cycle ... saw my lifts improve and something else happened I became more accepted by other guys in the gym who became good mates ... we had a common ground that didn't exist before. I felt like I was part of the group to a greater extent than before I started using.

- Drug Trend Theme: Masculine/Group Identity

Physical Injury

- 'Phil' 29

I tore my calf muscle playing football. I had never taken steroids before ... I looked online and there was a lot of evidence saying HGH could help repair muscle and tendon damage ... I knew a guy at the gym who uses [steroids] ... he suggested HGH, test', deca and mast' ... I took a load of other drugs to get rid of the side effects ... I recovered much quicker than the docs expected but couldn't go back to playing football ... I was so pissed off I decided to focus on bodybuilding ... I took a heart attack last year, I'm half the size I used to be and constantly regretful

- Drug Trend Theme: Adult Onset Trauma

Life Transitions:

- 'Ken' 32

I was always anti-steroid use, I believed if you couldn't do it on your own you didn't deserve it. I was promoted at work which involved moving to a new city ... I've always had trouble making friends and the new job was tough, I was really feeling the stress ... I bought my gear and needles online ... the results were phenomenal, my confidence increased, I started making friends ... when I came off cycle I found the same old problems coming back so I went back on ... Then I met my partner ... after a couple of years we decided to start a family ... I had messed up my system so much I couldn't recover ... the relationship ended ... I had no where else to turn but go back on [steroids]

- Drug Trend Theme: Reaction to Isolation – Availability

Intimate Relationships Ending:

- 'Tom' 39

I had been using gear since I was in my early 20s. I ran a couple of cycles a year and was happy with my progress ... when I was 35 my marriage broke down after 13 years, I didn't get to see my daughter, I had lost contact with friends, left home and spent a week living in my car ... Just like a guy whose marriage breaks up and goes to the pub until the bar staff throw him out I did the same with the gym ... it was all I had in my life ... I started using whatever I could get my hands on, running crazy cycles to distract me from everything else going on in my life

- Drug Trend Theme: Transitional Life Experiences

Employment:

- 'Joe' 21

I work as a doorman ... my background is in martial arts but sometimes that's not enough especially when you have three guys trying to take you down ... I started using gear because I thought it won't do me any harm being a couple of stone heavier, it might even the odds ... I loved it; the feeling I had was amazing, I love the attention, the look the fact that people thought twice about messing with me ... problem is Tony I don't want this to end, I love the feeling of being on and I've been promoted twice since I started using ... I don't think I'll ever come off it's blast and cruise for me

Drug Trend Theme: Dependency

Dependency:

- 'Sam' 29

I was injecting four mls three times a week ... I thought it [the pain] was PIP [post-injection pain] but it turned out to be an abscess ... while I was in hospital getting it cut out and packed I didn't want to risk losing my gains ... I got my mate to smuggle my gear in a washbag ... I sneaked into the toilet to inject ... I didn't know the vial was contaminated I ended up with infections in my delts and my other quad ... the doctors absolutely ripped into me

- Similar actions described by heroin users

Acute Mental Health Problems:

- 'Eddie' 44

I've never had any serious problems on cycle but during PCT I am a nightmare. I can count the number of times I've cried in my adult life on one hand but during my first PCT I was sitting watching TV alone and an advert came on for disabled donkeys in Peru ... I spent the next three hours in floods of tears after phoning the number on screen and donating £100 a month direct debit. When my wife found out she blew her lid ... she took my bank cards off me ... I get my pocket money at the same as the weans on a Friday night

Drug Trend Theme: Withdrawal and influence of Clomid

Chronic Mental Health Problems:

- ‘Gerard’ 50

I’ve always been effete, my classmates in school would bully me - it was clear from an early age I was gay. My parents weren’t much better, my dad used to say he would “knock the poof out of me” before I went to secondary school. My childhood was a nightmare but I kinda got over it when I came out ... I had problems fitting into the gay scene so started using steroids to make myself more masculine and attractive to other men, it worked, it felt amazing ... until I came off cycle. I began to experience suicidal ideation and came close to doing it [committing suicide] one night ... if it wasn’t for Bella [participants dog] I wouldn’t be here ... now I TRT

- Drug Trend Theme: Childhood Trauma, Steroid Use in People with Existing Mental Health Problems – Clomid use also reported by this participant

Polydrug Use :

- 'Jim' 31

I started using tren' ... it was amazing I loved the strength increase and the look it gave me but it caused anxiety I couldn't control ... I've never been violent but I felt myself flying into rages over small things ... I started using Xanax which helped at first then I had to take more I was popping 12 bars a day ... I have no memory of it but I got into the car and crashed into a wall ... Walked out unharmed and shoeless then started a live Facebook video ... Fortunately my brother was online, recognized where I was and came to get me ... I'm lucky I didn't kill myself or someone else

- Drug Trend Theme: Poly-Drug Use

IPEDs as Harm Reduction:

- 'Steven' 30

Over the years I've been addicted to everything, heroin, benzo's, crack you name it I've done it ... I've been through rehab, detox, done years in jail ... last time I was inside I started going to the gym, I enjoyed it so when I got out I kept it up ... then I started using gear ... my old mates were like "c'mon take a toot at least" but because I knew I had my cycle bought in I didn't want to waste it by going down that old road ... gear keeps me clean

- Harm reduction – increase in current/former heroin users using steroids

IPED Use Improving Mental Health

- 'Nick' 38

I had been suffering from depression for eight years ... I hated taking the anti-depressants, I put on weight I couldn't lose, I had no sex drive which caused problems in my relationship, I was constantly sweating ... I went to the gym on the advice of my CPN ... After a while I started a test' only cycle the depression cleared within a couple of weeks ... I stopped taking my meds and felt much better ... I know take a TRT dose weekly ... its been life changing for me

- Drug Trend Theme: Self Medication – Increasingly common among older males as a lifestyle drug

Female IPED Use:

- Increasing Number of Female Users
- Potential Problems far more serious for females using 'non-traditional' female cycles

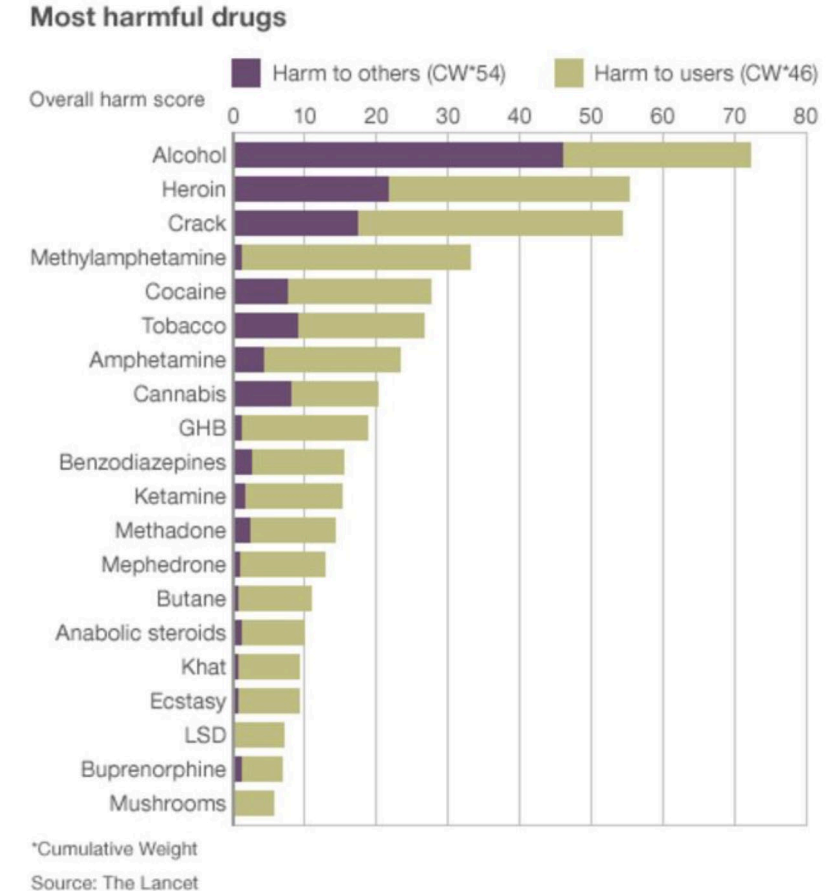
'Bev' 41

I used test' prop at 100mg EOD for 8 weeks ... I saw massive increases in muscle, aggression, hair growth all over my body, my voice got deeper, my daughters got bullied because of how I looked and, my clit ... I'm not gonna lie to you Tony it's the size of a wee dick! I'm too embarrassed to get involved in a relationship ... I mean what would any man think and how would I explain it ... Two years later I can't drop the muscle

- Time period between onset of use and resulting harm is less than males: consequences can be more serious

How Dangerous Are Steroids & Other IPEDs?

- There is no Simple Answer!
- Some Steroids have more Profound Effects than Others
- Other Variables Must be Considered:
 - Lifestyle
 - Pre-Existing Health Problems
 - Dose & Duration of Use
 - Risk Periods
 - Poly-Drug Use



Most Common Reported Harms:

- Acute (Potentially Chronic)
 - Hypogonadism
 - Loss of Libido
 - Erectile Dysfunction
 - Hypertension
 - Blood Lipid Profiles
 - Gynecomastia
 - Mental Health Issues
- Chronic
 - Cardiovascular: Ventricular Hypertrophy
 - Hematocrit
 - Infertility
 - Virilization in Females

IPED Clinics & Other Health Care Services

- IPED Clinics in Scotland: Gold Standard
- Benefits of IPED Clinics: Poly-Drug Use, Blood Test Screening, Harm Reduction
- Barriers to Health Care:
 - Many Steroid Users Do Not See Themselves as Drug Users
 - GPs are often Reported to be Dismissive of Steroid Related Symptoms
 - Endocrinologists Rarely see Referrals from GPs
 - Broscience: Ethnopharmacology – Folk Medicine

Summary & Emergent Trends:

- Although distinct from other drug users some IPED users do share commonalities
- Most IPEDs can be taken safely but there are common factors leading to unsafe usage
- IPED use is increasing but but this is difficult to measure
- People are using at an earlier age
- Testosterone increasingly used as a lifestyle drug
- Cruising between cycles is becoming more common
- We are in a good position to limit the damage caused by IPED use
- There is a real need to evaluate how we approach IPED users
- Services in Scotland are leading the way: how do we keep it that way

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