

## What are the risks?

Using PIEDs has a number of different risks

### Psychological:

- Mood swings
- Aggression
- Irritability
- Paranoia
- Violent outbursts
- States of confusion
- Dependency and addiction
- Bouts of aggression
- Relapse of mental health conditions
- Problems with coordination

### Physical:

- Acne
- In young users it can stop development
- Erectile dysfunction
- Loss of hair
- Growing of breasts in men
- Increased body and facial hair in women
- Menstrual complications
- Liver and kidney damage
- Heart attack or stroke
- Insomnia
- Urinary tract infections
- Decreased immunity

## Did you know?

PIEDs sold on the black market are often counterfeit, not regulated in any way and can vary in strength - some may not contain any active ingredients at all!

## PIEDs and the law

Anabolic steroids are controlled as class C substances under the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971.

There is no possession offence but it is illegal to manufacture, supply or possess/import/export steroids with the intent to supply, without a licence to do so. The maximum penalty for these offences is 14 years in prison and/or a heavy fine.

All other performance enhancing drugs are legal to use, however, if you're looking to enter into professional sport, you will need to check the governing bodies banned substance list.

## Find out more

If you would like more information or support on PIEDs or you are affected by someone else's use please contact us at Inclusion Recovery Hampshire.

Information is also available at:

NHS Website: [www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk)

Talk to Frank Website: [www.talktofrank.com](http://www.talktofrank.com)

### HOW TO CONTACT US

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Or visit: [www.staffstars.org](http://www.staffstars.org)

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# Performance and Image-Enhancing Drugs (PIEDs)

## What you need to know!



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## What are Performance and image enhancing drugs?

They are used to help an individual improve their performance when engaging in a physical activity, as well as sustaining prolonged high-level endurance.

- Possible benefits include increasing the size and definition of muscles, reducing body fat, increasing strength/endurance and helping the body recover from injury. These benefits can increase a user's confidence and self-esteem which may lead to them becoming psychologically dependent on these drug.
- The most widely-used type of PIED are anabolic steroids however this group also includes peptides and hormones such as androstenedione, human growth hormone, erythropoietin, diuretics, and various stimulants.
- Peptides work by stimulating the release of human growth hormone, which has an important role in muscle and bone growth. Peptides have become increasingly popular among athletes as they are hard to detect due to how quickly they are absorbed by the body.

## The myths

- Steroids are safe to use
- You're healthier when on a training plan
- Injectable steroids are safer than oral steroids

The truth is that steroids are dangerous and the side-effects are significant, and are more serious, the younger you are.

Injecting any drug can damage your veins and cause ulcers and gangrene, particularly with dirty needles or poor injecting technique.

Sharing needles, syringes and other injecting works can help spread HIV, hepatitis C and other infections.

## Why are PIEDs taken?

Using PIEDs (commonly referred to as 'doping'), has both positive and negative consequences:

Some believe that the benefits aren't worth the less-appealing outcomes of using these drugs.

Others use them to respond to body image issues and a lack of self-esteem and confidence.

The most commonly-used are anabolic steroids, androstenedione, and creatine.

## What do they look like and how are PIEDs taken?

There are four types of performance enhancing drugs:

### Anabolic steroids

Used to improve muscle mass and prolong the time you can engage in physical activity. Usually injected into the muscle or an oral tablet.

### Masking agents

Used to try and cover the use of illegal drugs. Usually comes in a compound which you would mix into a drink.

### Stimulants

The main stimulant used is caffeine, to increase energy and activeness. Usually mixed with a drink, but can be injected, swallowed as a tablet and even used as an inhaler.

### Erythropoietin (EPO)

Used to increase red blood cells, which in turn, allows the body to take on more oxygen. This is most commonly used intravenously.



## What are the effects?

The main reason for taking a performance enhancing drug is actually in the name:

- You can train for longer
- Builds muscle mass (and does this quicker)
- Ability to push your body further
- Allows the body to take in more oxygen
- Reduce body fat
- Builds protein in the body
- Aids recovery after a physical exercise
- Can help build self-confidence

Some of the negative effects can be:

- Bloating and water retention
- Numbness in hands and feet
- Increased tiredness and fatigue

PIEDs sold on the black market are often counterfeit, are not regulated in any way and may not have the effect that the buyer wanted (some have no active ingredients at all).

Many synthetic peptides are not approved for human use it is difficult know exactly what their harms may be.

