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Drug use patterns among high school athletes and nonathletes.

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This study examined drug use patterns and perceptions of drug intervention programs among adolescent interscholastic athletes and nonathletes. In particular, it explored the issue of whether participation in high school athletics is related to a healthier lifestyle and decreased use of recreational drugs and ergogenic aids. One thousand five hundred fifteen Massachusetts high school students completed a 150-item survey that assessed illicit and nonillicit substance use. Chi-square analyses revealed that athletes were significantly less likely to use cocaine and psychedelics, and were less likely to smoke cigarettes, compared with nonathletes. Conversely, nonathletes were less likely to use creatine than were athletes. There was no difference in the use of anabolic steroids and androstenedione between athletes and nonathletes. Descriptive analyses appear to indicate that drug interventions for athletes are falling short of their objectives. This study suggests that athletes have a healthier lifestyle and that the efficacy of intervention programs must be further examined.

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