

J Community Health. 1999 Apr;24(2):131-45.

Anabolic-androgenic steroid use among high school football players.

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Eight-hundred seventy-three Indiana high school football players were surveyed to investigate the use of anabolic-androgenic steroids (AAS). Subjects were varsity football players that were randomly selected from 27 high schools throughout Indiana. Out of a possible 1,325 subjects, 873 or 66% participated in the study. Subjects completed a 50 item questionnaire that measured demographic information, perceived use of AAS, reasons for use, and how AAS are taken. The results indicate that 6.3% of Indiana high school football players were current or former AAS users. The average age at time of first use of AAS was 14 years and 15% began taking before the age of ten. Almost half of respondents indicated they could obtain AAS if they so desired, and that other athletes, physicians, and coaches were listed as sources for AAS. Athletic trainers can play a vital role in disseminating accurate information about AAS abuse, including the long-term adverse health risks. These messages should begin with students and athletes as early as the fourth and fifth grades and delivered as often as possible throughout the school years.

PMID:

10202692

[PubMed - indexed for MEDLINE]