

# Why do athletes take steroids?

by Jason Foyer

I love sports. So do a lot of kids in my class. It feels good to win. But so many athletes, players me and my friends really like, take performance enhancing drugs. Why? In this article, I look into why they do this.

## Why do athletes take performance enhancing drugs?

Athletes take performance enhancing drugs to win games and matches. There is a lot of pressure to win. They can get rich or become famous if they get very popular. The drugs help them to become stronger or faster. There are serious side effects of taking these drugs. They could make you have big muscles now but you could risk illness, disability or death.

## Athletes in the news

Most recently, the athlete who has been accused of and he admitted it, of taking performance enhancing drugs is Lance Armstrong. Armstrong won the tour de France seven times. He was the best. Now it comes out that he used drugs to get so good. He got stripped of his medals because he took drugs. A-Rod (Alex Rodriguez) from the New York Yankees used to take steroids but now he does not. Barry Bonds was a top hitter in baseball and he took them as well as track star Marion Jones.



## What kind of drugs to they use?

The first kind is ***anabolic steroids***. This is the steroid that makes muscle mass and strength. They are responsible in the body for male traits like facial hair and a deeper voice.

ANother kind of drug is ***Human Growth Hormone***. This drug also effects muscle mass. It is hard to get because it can only be gotten from your doctor.

A third type of drug is called ***Erythropoietin*** or ***EPO***. This is the one that Lance armstrong admitted to taking (he also admitted to taking the other two kinds). It increases production of red blood cells and kidney function.

## What are the risks?

According to the staff at the famous Mayo Clinic, taking these drugs when you don't need them to get over a sickness can have serious bad effects on your health. It can make your liver and kidney's sick and hurt your heart. You could have a heart attack or stroke. There have been some deaths of athletes that they think is because of these drugs.

Many people think it's cheating for professional athletes to take these drugs. They think it is unfair to the other athletes working hard to win naturally. It is also a feeling that it is not okay because people are getting sick from taking the drugs.

