

Anabolic Steroids



roids • slop • juice • sauce

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What are Steroids

A synthetic drug that acts like your body's natural hormones, like testosterone.

Reasons steroids are used:

- ▶ Increase strength and muscle mass
- ▶ Increase muscle bulk
- ▶ Decrease body fat
- ▶ Increase energy



How do they work

Steroids are injected into a muscle and travel through the bloodstream to muscle cells to make them grow. They are meant to be used for a 6-8 week period with a longer or equal break of time from using (Refer to page 5 for more information on cycling).

Equipment

▶ Needle

- » Use an 18-23 G with 1-1.5 inch needle to draw up the steroid into the syringe.
- » Use an 21-25 G with 1-1.5 inch needle to inject the steroid into the muscle.
- » **TIP!** The smaller number of the gauge the thicker the needle.



▶ Syringe

- » Do not inject more than 2mL of solution at one time. You can be at risk for abscesses or muscle pain.

▶ Alcohol Swabs

- » Used to clean the area before injection to reduce the risk of bacterial infection into the bloodstream.



▶ Biohazard Bin

- » Put all used needles into a biohazard bin and bring back to the health unit for safe disposal (visit our website www.healthunit.org for locations of biohazard drop off bins).



Safe Injecting

- ▶ Only inject into a muscle (**Never inject into a vein**)
- ▶ Rotate injection sites to prevent muscle pain, tissue damage and abscesses.

Where to inject:

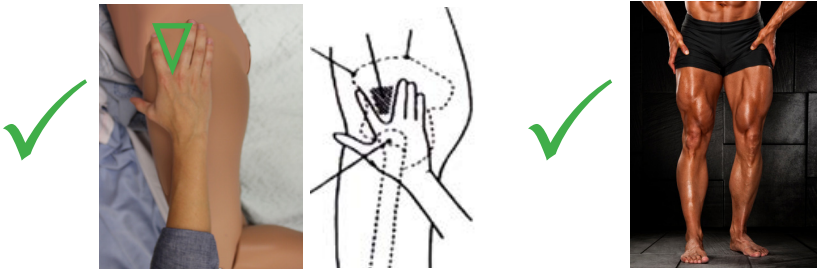
(Green= safer injection site. Yellow=don't use this site often. Red=high risk site)

Hip = ventrogluteal muscle

Safer area because there are no major nerves or blood vessels.

Thigh = vastus lateralis muscle

Middle outer muscle of each thigh.



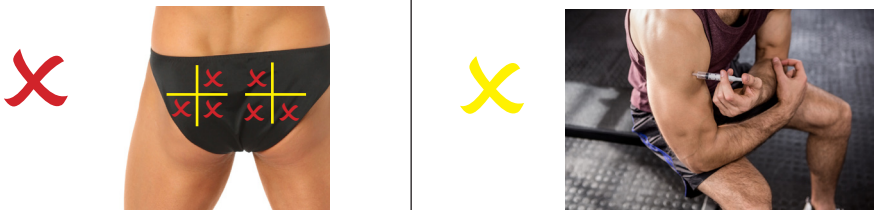
The hip (ventrogluteal muscle) can be a difficult location to find on your own body, it is best to have a healthcare provider or friend help you locate the injection site. Place the palm of your hand on the end of your femur and your index finger on the front of your pelvis and your thumb should point toward your groin. Then spread the middle finger out towards the top of the hip bone, the injection site will be the 'V' your fingers make.

Buttocks = dorsogluteal muscle

This is **not** a recommended site - risk of hitting the sciatic nerve.

Shoulder = deltoid muscle

Not the best site, smaller muscles. Multiple injects can result in abscesses and pain.



Note:

Injecting into other muscles such as, pecks or biceps can lead to nerve damage and other harms. Steroids work by traveling in your bloodstream and working with all the muscle cells in your body to grow. Injecting a steroid into the muscle you want to be bigger will not work and could lead to injury or nerve damage.

How to draw up and inject safely

- ▶ Allow refrigerated steroids to warm to room temperature before injecting to reduce shock to the muscle.

» Ampoule

- Break ampoule open away from yourself using an alcohol swab as a shield to avoid cutting yourself.
- Insert needle and draw up the steroid.



» Vial

- Open vial and clean rubber top with alcohol swab.
- Push the needle through the vial and draw the plunger back with the amount of steroid needed.



- ▶ Remember to use an 18-23 G with 1-1.5 inch needle to draw up the steroid into the syringe then switch the tip to an 21-25 G with 1-1.5 inch needle to inject the steroid into the muscle.
- ▶ Remove air bubbles by flicking the syringe barrel to move air bubbles to the top and then push the plunger to push air out through the needle.
- ▶ Prime the needle - push the solution up the needle until a few small drops come out the top.
- ▶ Clean the injection site.
- ▶ Hold the syringe at a 90 degree angle and inject steroid into the muscle.



Safer ways to use steroids

General Safety

- » Always use new equipment. Never re-use or share equipment, even sharing vials can spread infection because you don't know where that person used their needle last.
- » Make sure the package is sealed, hasn't expired and has clear liquid with no floating bits.
- » Do not inject more than 2mL into a muscle.
- » Remove air bubbles in syringe before injecting.

Cycling

- » Cycling is the amount of time you use steroids and the amount of time you take a break from using steroids.
- » Recommended cycle 6-8 weeks.
- » Recommended recovery period is equal to or greater than your period of use.
- » *Key point to remember about cycling:
 - Taking a 6-8 week break from using steroids allows your body to naturally produce testosterone again, which helps your body to adjust and heal.

Riskier Practices

Bridging

- » Periodic use of low-dose steroids during your cycle break.
- » Bridging can interfere with hormone recovery and prevent production of natural testosterone.

Stacking

- » Using more than one steroid at a time.
- » This can increase your risk for experiencing side effects (refer to page 6).

Risk of Infections

» Hepatitis B

- Spread through blood and bodily fluids.
- Spread by sharing needles and/or injecting equipment, unprotected sex and sharing personal hygiene tools (razors, toothbrushes, etc.).

» Hepatitis C

- Spread through blood to blood contact.
- Spread by sharing needles and/or injecting equipment and sharing personal hygiene tools (razors, toothbrushes, etc.).
- Hepatitis C can live for longer periods outside the body.

» HIV

- Spread through blood and bodily fluids.
- Spread by sharing needles or other injection equipment and unprotected sex.

Side Effects

*The higher the dose/amount/frequency = the higher risk for unwanted side effects. If the recommended break period is not taken between cycles, this can increase the chances of experiencing negative side effects.

*Some side effects are reversible, once you stop using steroids or take a break the side effect stops. Some side effects are irreversible and won't go back to normal once steroids use stops.

► General

- » Increased blood pressure
- » Liver damage
- » Acne
- » Hair loss

- » Stunted growth
- » Aggression and violence ('Roid rage')
- » Dependency/addiction can lead to withdrawal;
 - Mood swings
 - Low sex drive
 - Depression
 - Anxiety
 - Nausea
 - Headaches
 - Sweating
 - Fatigue
- » Depression during off cycles
- » Insomnia

▶ Male Specific

- » Breast development (irreversible)
- » Infertility
- » Sexual dysfunction (decreased desire or inability to obtain an erection)
- » Increase size of prostate
- » Testicle shrinking (reversible)
- » Heart complications

▶ Female Specific

- » Thickening of skin
- » Deepening of voice
- » Enlarged clitoris (irreversible)
- » Birth defects if used during pregnancy
- » Male pattern hair growth (face, chest, abdomen, back)
- » Altered menstrual cycle (reversible)
- » Decreased breast size
- » Decreased fertility

Smart Works Program

- ▶ Do you need any:
 - » Education on the type of steroids you are taking?
 - » Free equipment?
 - The Leeds, Grenville & Lanark District Health Unit offers FREE equipment, biohazard container and information on how to use steroids safely.

Brockville Office
458 Laurier Blvd.
Mon - Fri: 8:30 - 4:30
(closed 12 - 1)

Smiths Falls Office
25 Johnston St.
Mon - Fri: 8:30 - 4:30
(closed 12 - 1)

Gananoque Service Site
375 William St. S.
Tues - Wed 8:00 - 4:00
(closed 12 - 1)

Kemptville Service Site
2675 Concession Rd.
Mon - Fri: 8:30 - 3:30
(closed 12 - 1)

Perth Service Site
1 Sherbrooke St.
Mon: 10:30 - 4:00
(closed 12 - 1)

Almonte Service Site
79 Spring St.
Tues & Thurs: 9:00 - 4:00
(closed 12 - 1)

References

Ottawa Public Health (2013). Anabolic Steroids. Retrieved from <http://librarypdf.catie.ca/PDF/ATI-20000s/26426.pdf>

Llewellyn, W. (2011) William Llewellyn's Anabolics 10TH Edition. Jupiter, FL: Molecular Nutrition.

For more information, call 1-800-660-5853
or visit www.healthunit.org

