

UNDERSTANDING PERFORMANCE ENHANCING DRUGS

WHAT ARE PERFORMANCE ENHANCING DRUGS?

- **Performance enhancing drugs (PEDs)** are substances used to try to boost athletic performance.
- There are many different substances used to enhance performance — some legal, some illegal — but all can be dangerous when misused.
 - Common PEDs include: Anabolic-androgenic steroids, androstenedione (andro), human growth hormone, creatine, and more.

WHAT’S THE HARM WITH USING PERFORMANCE ENHANCING DRUGS?

| Anabolic Steroids | Androstenedione | Human Growth Hormone |
|--|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Acne• Damage to the cardiovascular and reproductive systems• Organ damage• Mood changes• Increased risk for injury | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Hormone disruption• Damage to the cardiovascular and reproductive system• Acne• Mood changes | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Joint pain• Muscle weakness• Fluid retention• Carpal tunnel syndrome• Enlargement of the heart• Increased risk of diabetes |

WHAT ABOUT SUPPLEMENTS AND VITAMINS?

- Not all supplements are safe. Some may contain harmful or unlisted ingredients, and may be particularly unhealthy for youth.
- Vitamins are important, but taking too much or using them without medical advice can be risky.
- Always consult with your healthcare provider and guardian before using any supplements or vitamins.
- Overall, most performance-enhancing supplements have not been seen to be beneficial to youth athletes.

RESOURCES

- **Massachusetts Substance Use Helpline:** 1-(800)-327-5050; www.helplinema.org
- **Boston Children’s ASAP Program:** (617)-355-2727; ASAP@childrens.harvard.edu
- **SAMHSA’s National Helpline:** 1-(800)-662-HELP (4357)
- **Walpole Prevention Coalition:** www.walpolepreventioncoalition.com

