**Paper Title:** Doping in the gym: Use of steroids by Belgian fitness center members

**Abstract**:

Although the accurate prevalence of performance-enhancing drugs in a sports context remains difficult to assess, there is evidence that both athletes and recreational sportspeople use legal and illegal performance-enhancing drugs. In particular, the use of anabolic androgenic steroids (AAS) in fitness environments is increasingly considered a public health problem in various countries. Recent research into the use of AAS in fitness environments has shown great variance in users’ approach to health risks and desired objectives. The present paper examines the prevalence, attitudes towards and motives for AAS use among recreational gym users in Belgium. The results of this paper are based on a large-scale survey that was distributed among gym-goers in the two main Belgian communities. In addition, focus groups were held in order to better understand the motives for using or not-using PED and the users’ perceptions of the alleged health risks.

**Key words**: steroids, fitness, performance-enhancing drugs, doping

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