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What Counts as Drug Use in Sports?

Is eye-surgery like steroids? Should performance-enhancers be permitted? Let your voice be heard

By [Brett Zarda](#) Posted 01.07.2009 at 12:17 pm

Every issue has two sides and at ProCon.org they offer the pros and cons to each. From politics to prostitution to the death penalty, the non-partisan nonprofit organization has invited experts to offer their unbiased, differing, opinions on controversial issues since 2004. The latest topic on the forum? Drug use in sports.

The setup of each topic, whether medical marijuana, euthanasia or felon voting, is similar. A single broad question is asked, in this case, "Should performance enhancing drugs (such as steroids) be accepted in sports?" There's a one-minute (and sometime ten minute) overview that offers an introduction to the issue and several popular pros and cons. The topic is then broken down into subcategories with sub questions such as "are the laboratories used to test athletes credible and reliable" or whether Tiger Woods' alleged LASIK surgery is ethically equivalent to injecting steroids. For each question a series of quotes from qualified 'experts' are included as either a pro or a con with a brief background on the experts' qualifications. From medical doctors to former athletes to ethicists, the discussion truly is fair and balanced. Experts are rated on a five star system with respect to their credentials to speak on the topic (a method worthy of its own debate). Normally five pros and five cons are included for each sub-question. Responses are at times directly elicited from the respondent by the website or taken from a quote in a mainstream publication. Responses can cite data from peer reviewed literature or merely offer an opinion.

The sports topic, still new, has 30 questions and more than 250 responses from 200 sports experts (Lance Armstrong, Gene Upshaw, Gary Wadler, etc). The site goes to great length to stress that what they present is "intended for the public, policy makers, the media, scholars, scientists, and students. It is not represented as science, but rather as a compilation of the best Pro, Con, or General Reference responses we can find on each site's core question and related issues." Sounds better than much of the so-called science available elsewhere on the Web and [well worth a read](#).

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