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Top five banned substances in sports

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Many sports and leagues including the Olympics, NFL, MLB and the NCAA ban many substances for their effects on the human body. [Reuters reports Colorado Rockies' minor league player Mike Jacobs](#)(notes) became the first athlete in North America suspended for testing positive for human growth hormone (HGH).

The substance found in Jacobs' body is one of 192 known substances that are illegal for some types of athletes to use in competition. [ProCon.org](#) states different classes of drugs are more popular to use than others.

Anabolic Steroids

As many as 56 anabolic steroids are on banned substance lists in various sports. [WebMD states](#) these classes of drugs enhance testosterone levels in the body, thereby increasing muscle mass faster. Steroids are used to treat all kinds of medical maladies such as asthma, but when used in healthy athletes they become illegal substances that enhance an athlete's performance.

Human Growth Hormone

Human growth hormone (HGH) is naturally produced by the pituitary gland in the brain. It helps maintain healthy organs and tissues. The [Mayo Clinic](#) lists the therapeutic effects in reversing aging are controversial, but HGH does help adults feel and become seemingly younger. As such, muscles perform better as do the lungs and heart on the field. Because of these enhancing effects, HGH is banned in many sports.

Stimulants

Stimulants increase heart rate and overall body functions temporarily. Common substances such as caffeine in coffee and soda can be classified as a stimulant drug that can be banned. Other types of this class of drug can be found in cold medicine. [Even the NCAA](#) has banned caffeine use over 140 mg per day. The Mayo Clinic states one cup of coffee can have anywhere from 95 to 200 mg of caffeine in it.

Diuretics

Diuretics speed up the body's process of excreting waste excrement. The [Guardian of](#)

Britain reports they also help speed up weight loss by keeping food in the body for a smaller amount of time. Sports ban diuretics because it can also flush trace amounts of other banned substances out of the body in time for a drug test.

Hormone Antagonists

Hormone antagonists are used to treat breast cancer but they can also reduce the effects of anabolic steroid use. This class of drugs also act as a contraceptive in the human body. Athletes abuse hormone antagonists as they have the same basic effects as anabolic steroids when they increase muscle mass and can help release more testosterone into the body.

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