

ST JOHN'S COLLEGE STEROID TESTING POLICY

Reasons for the policy

The desire to achieve an “enviable” body image, to succeed on the sports field, or play for the school first or provincial team, are strong and often overriding motivators and influences in the lives of adolescent boys. These influences can cause boys to risk their short and long-term health by using banned performance-enhancing substances as a shortcut to meeting these goals. This is cheating and a violation of the honesty and integrity that should be inherent in fair participation. Moreover St John's College is committed to act against this behaviour by introducing a steroid testing programme and to educate boys on the health dangers of taking anabolic steroids. The Headmasters of the boys' schools have also agreed to work together in eradicating this behaviour by introducing testing in their schools.

Reasons for testing

- Using steroids without a prescription and without proper medical supervision can cause serious, adverse health effects.
- Using steroids and other performance-enhancing drugs can give an unfair advantage over the competition, and is cheating.
- Testing for steroids can help deter their use among school pupils.
- Steroids are drugs that should only be used to treat medical conditions. Possession, use or dealing of most steroids without a prescription is illegal.

St John's recognizes that it will take a community-wide effort by parents, coaches, pupils, teachers and physicians to attack this growing challenge. Steroid testing is one tool that can assist in discouraging pupils from taking steroids.

Definition of Steroids

Anabolic steroids, officially known as anabolic-androgen steroids (AAS) or colloquially simply as "steroids", are drugs which mimic the effects of the male sex hormones testosterone and dihydrotestosterone. They increase protein synthesis within cells, which results in the build-up of cellular tissue (anabolism), especially in muscles. Anabolic steroids also have androgenic and virilising properties, including the development and maintenance of masculine characteristics. www.wada-ama.org

The Policy definition

It shall be considered a violation of the sportsmanship code of conduct for any student to possess, ingest or otherwise use any substance on the list of banned substances as indicated by the South African Institute for Drug Free Sport (SAIDS), without written prescription by a fully-licensed physician as recognised by the South African Medical Association, to treat a medical condition.

In short, use of performance-enhancing drugs by pupils at St John's College is considered to be cheating and will be penalized.

Consent form

All pupils' parents or guardians at St John's consent in writing to the drug-testing policy administered at St John's. Testing for performance-enhancing substances forms part of this testing programme. Failure to sign the consent form renders the student ineligible to participate in any sports programme, whether it be at an inter-house or inter-schools level, until the form is signed.

The testing programme

- Any pupil can be tested.
- The school will carry the cost of the initial test but in cases of positive results the follow-up tests' costs will be for the relevant parents' account.
- Testing can be conducted at any time of the year, pre-season, during a particular season or after.
- Testing will not be restricted to any one particular sport.
- The programme will be administered in two ways:
 - **Internal testing** by the school through Drug Detection International (DDI) – Violations here, as a result of a positive test, will be penalised in accordance to the school policy and will not be reported to SAIDS.
 - **External testing** through SAIDS and mostly for inter-schools matches – Violations here will be dealt with at National sporting level and bans of up to two years are possible. These tests will be conducted when playing in tournaments, festivals and inter-schools matches, and not necessarily only at 1st team level.
- Urine tests will be used.
- The substances tested for will include any substances that are banned by SAIDS which falls under the banner of the World Anti Doping Agency (WADA). **Using any substance belonging to a banned class violates the rules of sportsmanship, can be detrimental to the pupil's health and is considered cheating.**
- Nutritional and dietary supplements are not on the banned substances list but all pupils must be aware that many supplements contain banned substances due to the unregulated nature of the supplement industry. Impure supplements may lead to positive test results because the purity and safety of nutritional dietary supplements cannot be guaranteed. **The use of supplements is at the student's own risk.**

Recommended consequences for violating the steroid policy

Any person who tests positive in a test, or any person who refuses to provide a testing sample, or any person who reports his own violation, through the programme at St John's College:

- Will be informed, along with his parents, according to the same process as per the substance abuse policy, of the consequences in regards to the violation. This will be fully documented.
- May immediately forfeit his eligibility to participate in any competitive sport for St John's College for a period of one year from the date of the test.
- Will need to continue serving the seasonal sports chosen in whatever capacity required i.e. linesman, scoring, table duty etc.
- May also forfeit any individual honour earned while in violation. This means that colours awarded, during the season prior to the test being positive, may be removed.
- Will only resume eligibility for participation in sport after he has undergone counseling and produces a negative test result from the same testing organization DDI. This will be at his own expense.

Any pupil who deals in steroids is in violation of the substance abuse policy and will be called before the Disciplinary Council with his parents. Selling drugs including steroids or other illegal substances at St John's College may lead to expulsion.

The effects of anabolic steroid use

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