



Stimulants

What are they?

Stimulants are substances that have a short-term effect to enhance performance and elevate mood. They have a direct stimulating effect on the central nervous system. Stimulants increase the excitation of the brain and spinal cord, the cardiac output and rate of metabolism and delay fatigue.

What should you know?

Stimulants cause the body to stay active and more aggressive for longer than normal which reduces the body's ability to cool itself down and places pressure on the heart.

Why would athletes use them?

Stimulants may be used to attain the same effect as adrenaline, which is secreted naturally in our body. This may:

- Increase the general rate of metabolism and delay fatigue.
- Raise the body temperature, heart rate and blood pressure and cause euphoria.
- Reduce tiredness and increase alertness, competitiveness, and aggression.

What are the side-effects?

The side-effects of using stimulants are:

- Loss of appetite
- Loss of sleep (insomnia)
- Reduction of fatigue resulting in exhaustion
- Euphoria
- Hallucinations (psychosis)
- Trembling
- Restlessness, agitation, tenseness
- High blood pressure (hypertension)
- Palpitations and heart rhythm disorders
- Diminished coordination, judgmental ability and self-criticism
- Addiction
- Increased body temperature (hyperthermia)