

# Dangerous Drugs Available to Teens

Seeking popularity and friends, teens set goals to look better, do it better – *be the best*. Many try products and substances to help achieve their goals.

Researchers report increased teen usage of substances, drugs, and energy drinks to:

- Improve athletic ability,
- Boost muscle mass,
- Lose weight,
- Improve concentration and
- Lengthen “awake-time”.

Teens can easily obtain these inexpensive substances. However, no one regulates these substances. **Parents should have concerns** when teens buy and ingest these over-the-counter and Internet products. Many are harmful - even deadly.

**Steroids** and **synthetic human growth hormone** are two substances used to improve athletic ability. Teens also use them to improve their appearance. Synthetic human growth hormone (hGH) is an approved product only when doctors prescribe it for certain medical conditions. Yet, non-medical dealers sell hGH and other unsafe drugs, like steroids, in products and as supplements.

**Pure caffeine powder** is another unregulated, risky drug. Teens use it as a pick-me-up. Some use it before working out. Others use it to help with weight loss.



Teens go online to buy pure caffeine powder. They can even buy it in bulk. It may seem harmless because caffeine is present in coffee, tea, soft drinks and energy drinks.

Pure caffeine powder is *a potent drug*. One teaspoon of pure caffeine equals the amount of caffeine in 25 cups of coffee. This small amount can cause an overdose. It can cause death. Often, teens do not measure this powder carefully. Kitchen utensils do not provide an accurate measurement.

Popular **energy drinks** also contain caffeine. Amounts of caffeine vary. Labels may not accurately reflect the amount of caffeine. Stores sell them, so teens may consider them a harmless soft drink. Some teens drink more than one drink in a short period of time, which could send them to the emergency room.

Talk to your teen. Ask questions. Is she using or thinking of using any of these harmful products. Doctors recommend a limit of **100 milligrams of caffeine** (one cup of coffee a day) for teens. Using several products exceeds this safe amount of caffeine. Tell your teen to avoid these dangerous drugs.

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