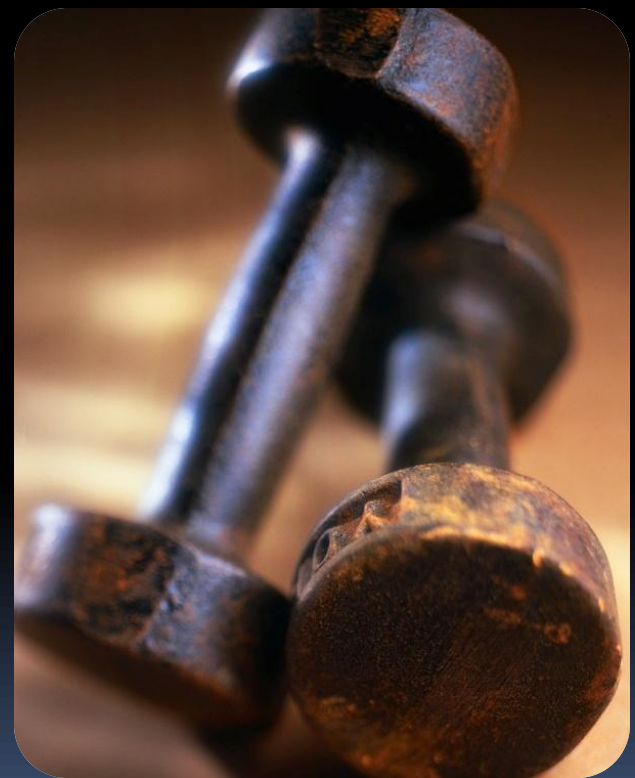


Testing in gyms

- can it be justified?

Ask Vest Christiansen
Department of Sport Science
Aarhus University

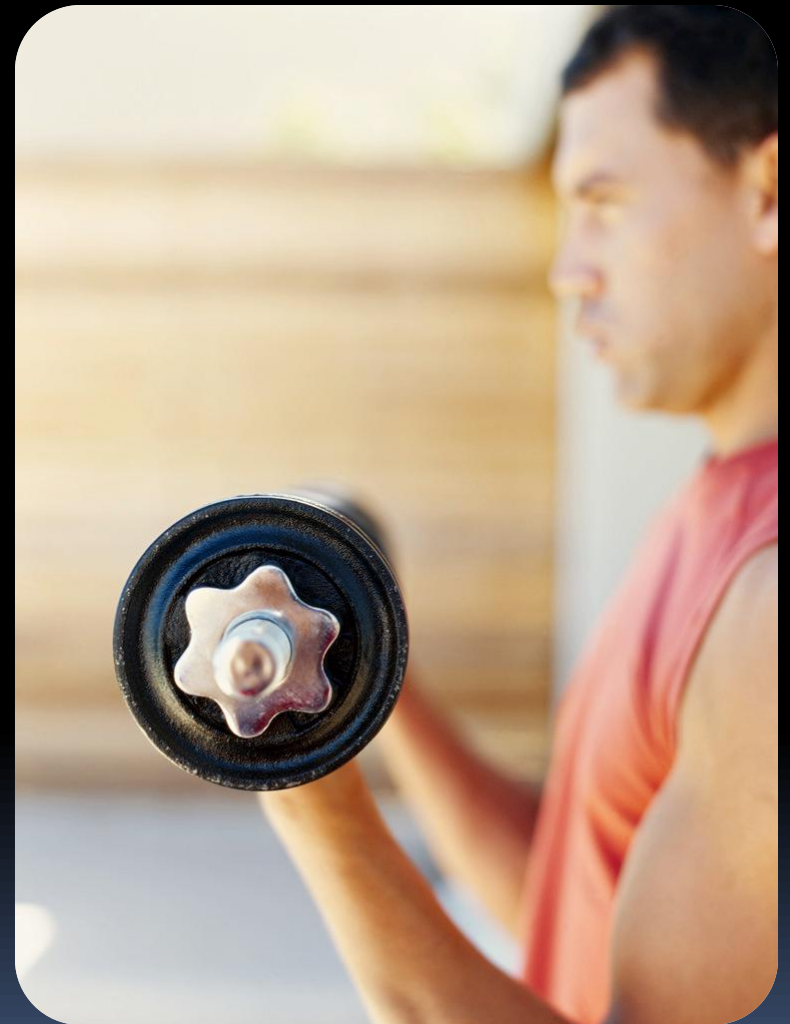


Most governments and public institutions believe the use of anabolic androgenic steroids (AAS) in gyms should be fought. But they do not agree on how.

Two main arguments:

1. Use of AAS among recreational athletes has increased
2. Use of AAS is a (public) health problem.

Testing in gyms is a new (and controversial) way of fighting the use of steroids among recreational athletes.



The Danish approach

Anti Doping Denmark (ADD), has since 2005 conducted doping tests in gyms.

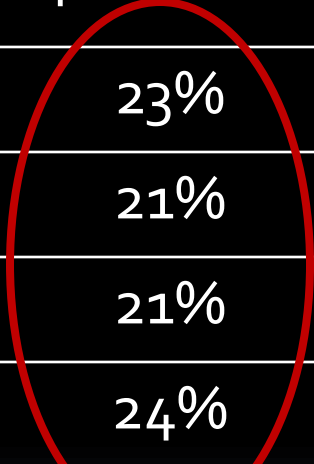
Athletes who tests positive are excluded from the gym in question for two years. And from all competitions under the Sports Confederation of Denmark for two years.

A refusal to be tested counts as a positive test.



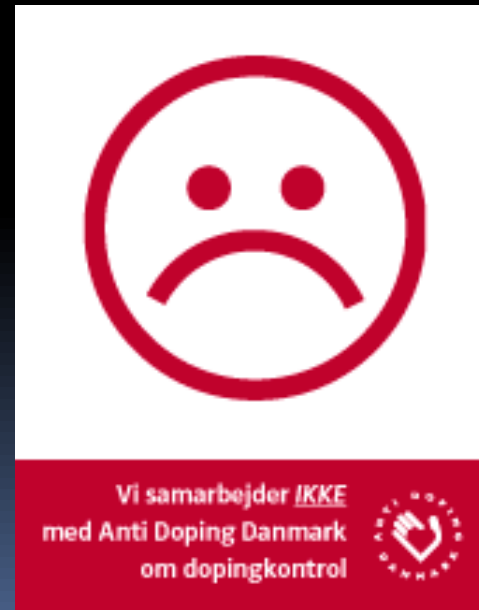
Testing in Danish gyms

Year	Number of tests	Number of positive tests	Percentage of positives
2005	106	24	23%
2006	216	46	21%
2007	243	51	21%
2008	463	111	24%



Testing in Danish Gyms

Gyms are required by law to display a sticker on the entrance door with either a positive or a negative smiley to show whether testing takes place or not.



The legal foundation of anti-doping work

“The purpose of doping control, as it is stated in the preliminary work to the law on the promotion of a doping free sport, is to strengthen the fundamental values of sport and secure the health of the athletes. To this is added the prospect to affect the sale of doping drugs, which are often imported and distributed illegally, especially in environments in and around gyms. There is no doubt that doping control pursues legal purposes. Neither is there any doubt that doping control is a necessity, if the legal purposes should be realised.”



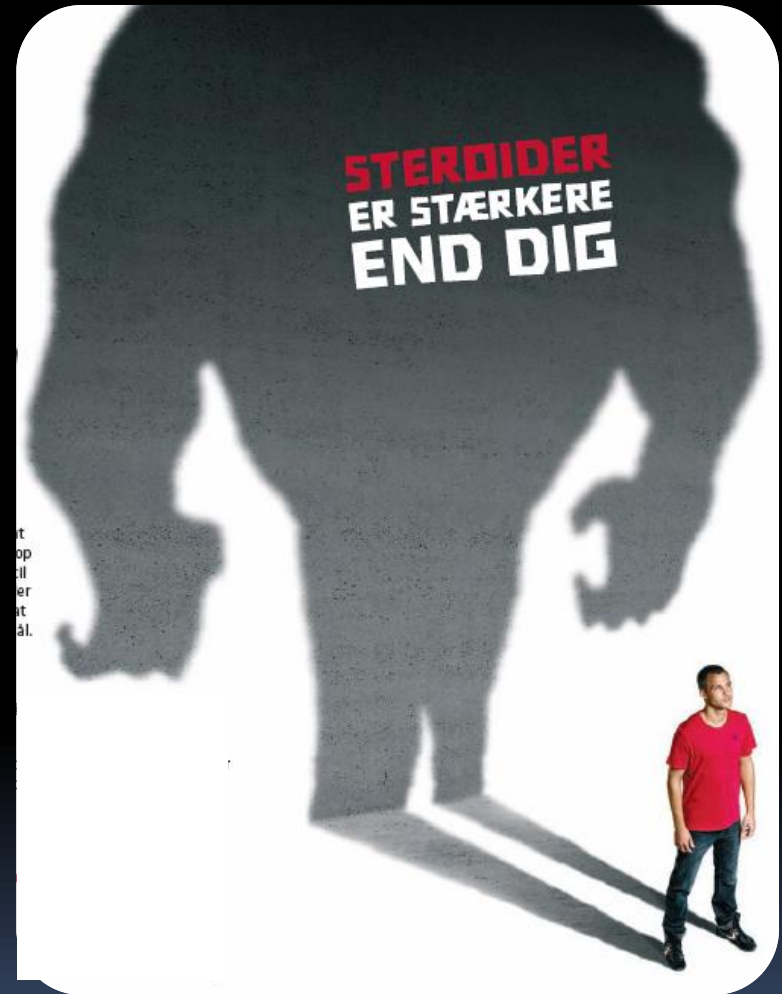
Jens Evald, professor of Law and chair of Anti Doping Denmark, in Christiansen (2009)

Intended consequences

To concentrate users in certain gyms,
thereby better controlling the situation

→ Gyms with control will have fewer
negative role models, resulting in fewer
new users.

People will abstain from using drugs out
of fear of being kicked out of their gym.



Testing in Danish Gyms

Tests are conducted in accordance with WADA's regulations for out of competition testing.

More than 95 % of tested individuals never compete

The aim for most users of ASS is to achieve a body closer to their idea of the ideal body.



When a doping control is performed the individual that is chosen must undress in front of the inspectors.

The person is asked to roll down his trousers to the knees and lift his T-shirt up to the navel, so the genitals are clearly visible. He is then asked to urinate while the inspector watches – from the side or the front.



Urinprøve

Urinprøve

A personal account of being tested

It wasn't nice. We can all pee when we are at the pub. But it isn't easy when someone is watching. And it isn't easy when you're also under suspicion and therefore nervous too. And you stand there with that f.....g little cup and need to hit the target and it can all be such a mess. It was unpleasant.

He stood close behind me with his chin over my shoulder so he could look down at my willy while I urinated.

It was necessary for him to stand like that to see if I had a rubber tube with false urine or wanted to cheat in some other way.

I am not even sure if they are allowed to do that? Isn't that indecent exposure?

And at the same time the other officer, who is a lady, sits in the changing room next to us. It's not that she can see anything, but her room is not separated by doors from where I am. So she can hear all what's happening.

The European Convention on Human Rights' provision on the protection of privacy (article 8)

“It follows from article 8, section 2, (of ECHR) that the state can only intervene in the privacy of its citizens, if there are substantial reasons for doing so, and at the same time there must be *proportionality* between the nature of the intervention and the purpose that is the object of the intervention. The requirement of proportionality means that the state must choose a less radical measure of restriction as opposed to a more radical, and that the measure must stand in a reasonable relation to the stated purpose.”



Unintended consequences

Intended: → People will abstain from using drugs of fear of being kicked out of their gym.

Study of anonymous enquiries about drugs to ADD (n=1,398)

- 10% of enquirers who used AAS worried about the doping controls.
- 30% of individuals using legal supplements were concerned about the risk of obtaining a positive test.

(Bojsen-Møller & Christiansen, 2009)



Unintended consequences

Possible outcomes of a positive test:

- 1) Join another gym
- 2) Train in basements and private clubs (if/when a database with names of positive athletes becomes available to all gyms).
- 3) Stop training and be a couch potato.



“It is our belief that any change in legislation that would serve to drive users underground would further limit the ability of both the health services and researchers to engage with these individuals — including limiting the ability to provide sterile injecting equipment. This would not only have an adverse impact on the health of these individuals, but could increase the risk of blood-borne virus transmission further within the general population.”

Evans Brown & McVeigh , “Anabolic steroid use in the UK – Briefing paper”





“There are reasons to warn against hasty and ill-thought proposals for increasingly dense monitoring of athletes in relation to doping control. Each time an intensified form of control is taken into service, a definitive step is taken, since all experience shows that there is no right of cancellation to such steps.”

*Professor of Law and chair of Anti Doping
Denmark, Jens Ewald*

