

WEIGHTY MATTERS

Participating in weight-related sports is associated with dangerous behaviors



EVEN TEEN GIRLS AREN'T IMMUNE TO STEROID USE.

Original Research

Vertalino, M., et al. Participation in weight-related sports is associated with higher use of unhealthful weight-control behaviors and steroid use. *Journal of the American Dietetics Association* 107:434-440, 2007.

Everyone is looking for an edge on the competition. But some athletes go to extreme lengths to get that edge. Some sports, by their very nature, seem to encourage people to jeopardize their own health. For example, sports that emphasize body weight and size, such as wrestling, gymnastics, and powerlifting, may put athletes at an increased risk of unhealthy behaviors such as steroid use or disordered eating. Most of the research in this area has focused on females. A study recently published in the *Journal of the American Dietetics Association* addressed this imbalance by looking at both males and females in order to determine whether participation in a weight-related sport was associated with unhealthy behaviors.

Power Key: teen athlete, weight control, steroids, disordered eating