

Results: Optimal conditions were achieved with 2×10^4 cells/well. Microscopy observation showed that DMSO exhibited the highest toxicity. Between acetonitrile and methanol, there were no observable differences by microscopy. The same result was obtained by the MTT assay, where a 2-way ANOVA revealed no statistically significant differences in viability for all studied percentages. For methanol and acetonitrile, the cell viability results were above 80%. Preliminary MTT results indicate that isotornitazene has a higher effect on cell viability than metonitazene, and that both nitazenes significantly reduce cellular viability compared to morphine.

Conclusions: The obtained results clarify the extent of nitazenes' threat and provide insight into the possible relationship between their chemical structure and their toxicological effects on human health.

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A regional survey on Image and Performance Enhancing Drug Use and its psychological correlates in the Trentino-Alto Adige sports community

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Introduction: The use of Image and Performance Enhancing Drugs (IPEDs) has steadily increased in recent years, encompassing a spectrum from common nutritional supplements to potentially harmful pharmacological substances. This study was designed to investigate IPEDs use among sport and fitness practitioners, aiming to address relevant psychological factors which may contribute to potentially risky misconducts. Previous research has identified appearance-related anxiety and exercise addiction as significant risk markers for potentially harmful behaviours, while social media exposure and problematic internet use may further reinforce such tendencies. This study examined the prevalence of IPEDs use in Trentino-Alto Adige sport practitioners and its associations with appearance anxiety, exercise addiction, problematic internet use, and self-compassion as a potential protective factor.

Methods: Data were collected among adult participants through an anonymous online survey distributed between March and August 2025 in gyms, fitness centers, sports associations, stadiums, and public places such as libraries and universities, as well as online. Descriptive statistics (sex, education, occupation) as well as frequencies in the use of different products or related to sport preferences have been collected. Participants were categorized according to whether they reported using non-harmful (e.g., proteins, vitamins) or potentially harmful IPEDs (e.g., anabolic agents, hormones). Binary logistic regressions were conducted to test associations between harmful IPED use and appearance anxiety, exercise addiction, problematic internet use and self-compassion.

Results: A total of 291 respondents completed the survey. After excluding incomplete responses and failed attention checks, 267 participants were retained for analysis ($M = 114$, $F = 151$, Unspecified = 2). Most users engaged primarily in fitness or gym workouts (25.8%), followed by weight lifting (12.4%), running (8.2%), and mountain or outdoor sports (6.4%). Within this regional sample, 40.8% of respondents reported using supplements or performance-enhancing products. Specifically, 25.5% used at least one potentially risky IPED, 15.4% used only non-harmful products, and 59.2% reported no use. Among IPEDs or supplement users, online purchase was the most frequent method (27.7%), followed by pharmacies (17.2%). Preliminary analyses indicated that exercise addiction above the clinical cut-off score significantly increased the likelihood of potentially risky IPEDs consumption ($p = .001$, $OR = 5.03$), whereas self-compassion emerged as a protective factor ($p = .005$, $OR = 0.59$). Appearance anxiety and problematic internet use were positively, though not significantly, associated with potentially harmful misuse in this sample. Conclusion: These findings

highlight a concerning prevalence of IPEDs use among sport and fitness practitioners in Trentino-Alto Adige, particularly regarding online purchase and the use of potentially harmful substances. Exercise addiction appears to play a central role in predicting risky behaviours, whereas self-compassion may buffer against such tendencies. This suggests that psychological interventions promoting self-compassion and adaptive self-regulation could serve as effective protective strategies. Further research is warranted to explore the mediating role of digital exposure and to inform targeted prevention programs within fitness and sporting environments.

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Scherma Bradamante: Fencing Programme for Victims of Violence and Individuals Affected by Body Dysmorphic Disorder

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Scherma Bradamante APS-ASD is an Italian association that organises fencing workshops designed to promote growth, recovery, and personal reconstruction for individuals who have experienced abuse or violence in any form, including bullying and workplace bullying, or who are affected by body dysmorphic disorder. These workshops combine fencing and psychotherapy, with the support of both a fencing coach and a psychotherapist. The Association has developed a Protocol to help resolve issues relating to anxiety, stress management, post-traumatic stress disorder and substance abuse in adults and children affected by violence or body dysmorphic disorder. The workshops offer personalised support and include different fencing practices that combine psychological and physical elements. These promote emotional regulation by teaching assertiveness, confidence, balance, control and commitment. Fencing is indeed a particularly effective physical activity for promoting emotional regulation. It is a high-intensity combat sport and martial art that does not involve direct physical contact, requiring the use of a mask (a powerful tool for introspection). By the end of the programme, users can remove their masks, having completed their introspective journey towards greater personal fulfilment. This process of inner growth, combining fencing and psychotherapy, helps overcome trauma caused by abuse and violence.

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"High, Intimate, and Unspoken": Exploring Sexualized Use of Synthetic Stimulants in Kazakhstan

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Introduction: Synthetic stimulants such as mephedrone and MDMA are increasingly used to enhance sexual experiences. While this phenomenon is documented in several regions, it remains underexplored in Central Asia, where stigma and limited harm reduction infrastructure pose additional challenges.

Methods: A qualitative exploratory study was conducted using semi-structured interviews with six participants (aged 22–37) in Kazakhstan who reported using synthetic stimulants in sexual contexts. Participants were recruited via peer referrals. Thematic analysis was used to examine motivations, perceived effects, consent dynamics, sexual health behaviors, and access to support.

Results: Participants described stimulant use as a means to intensify intimacy, prolong sexual encounters, and reduce emotional barriers. However, risks included unprotected sex, prolonged sessions leading to physical exhaustion, and difficulties in navigating consent. None of the par-