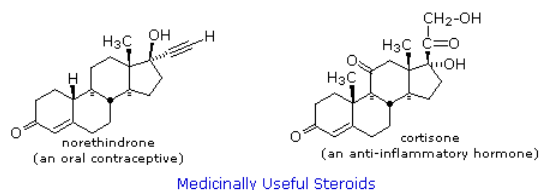


11.4: Interesting Alkynes

The important class of lipids called **steroids** are actually metabolic derivatives of terpenes, but they are customarily treated as a separate group. Steroids may be recognized by their tetracyclic skeleton, consisting of three fused six-membered and one five-membered ring.

Steroids are widely distributed in animals, where they are associated with a number of physiological processes. Examples of some important steroids are shown in the following diagram. Norethindrone is a synthetic steroid, all the other examples occur naturally. A common strategy in pharmaceutical chemistry is to take a natural compound, having certain desired biological properties together with undesired side effects, and to modify its structure to enhance the desired characteristics and diminish the undesired. This is sometimes accomplished by trial and error.



Contributors

- William Reusch, Professor Emeritus ([Michigan State U.](#)), [Virtual Textbook of Organic Chemistry](#)

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