

**Why do people use drugs / alcohol?** Different people use different drugs or alcohol for different reasons. There are of course legal drugs which we all come across every day. For example, you may take medicine when you are sick, alcohol to help you relax or coffee to help you stay awake. However, use of these drugs or alcohol should be differentiated from abuse or dependence. We are talking about drugs / alcohol in this booklet. You may experiment with drugs / alcohol out of curiosity, because your friends are doing it or to escape boredom or worries. You may take certain drugs or consume alcohol to change how you feel. You may believe it's a fun or fashionable thing to do. You may continue to use a drug / alcohol because you enjoy it, or because it's part of your social life or culture. This is often called 'recreational' use. Sometimes drug or alcohol use can become an important part of your life. This may be because of emotional, psychological or social problems you are experiencing. Some drugs can make you addicted or dependent, where you lose control over your drug use and feel you cannot function without the drug. Some people use more than one drug at the same time - this is known as 'poly-drug use'. Mixing drugs can be dangerous because the effects and side-effects are added together. This includes mixing illegal drugs with legal drugs such as alcohol or medication. For example, taking alcohol with cocaine increases your risk of irregular heart rhythms, heart attacks and even death. Know the facts about drugs. There are no easy answers to the problems caused by drug or alcohol use, but knowing the facts can help you deal with drug or alcohol issues.

**Myth 1: "All drugs or alcohol are addictive"** Fact: Some drugs / alcohol can create addiction or dependence much quicker than others. There is no evidence that people get 'hooked' after one or two uses, or that everyone who tries a drug will become addicted. Using a drug or alcohol even once can cause serious problems. Addiction depends on the what, who, why, where and how of use.

**Myth 2: "Only drug addicts or alcoholics have a problem"** Fact: Addiction or dependency is not the only problem drugs or alcohol can cause. Some people have problems the first time they use a drug or alcohol, or problems may develop as you use them more often. Drug or alcohol use can affect your physical and mental health, your family life, relationships and your work or study. Using illegal drugs can also get you into trouble with the law or cause money problems.

**Myth 3: "Young people are tempted to try drugs by pushers"** Fact: Most young people are introduced to illegal drugs by a friend or someone they know. In many cases drugs are 'pulled' rather than 'pushed' - the person asks for it themselves, often out of curiosity or because others are doing drugs.

Myth 4 : “All illegal drugs are equally harmful” Fact: Different drugs can harm you in very different ways. Some drugs, such as heroin, are regarded as more dangerous because they have a higher risk of addiction and overdose, or because they are injected. However, each drug has its own risks. Drugs are often described as being either ‘hard’ or ‘soft’ but it’s not as simple as that.

Myth 5: “My teenager is moody and losing interest in school - they must be on drugs” - a parent asks. Fact: Parents often ask how they can tell if their child is using drugs. But you should be careful of lists of signs and symptoms. Many of the possible signs, such as mood swings or loss of interest in hobbies or study, are also normal behaviour for teenagers. It is better to talk to them before jumping to conclusions. If you find that your child is taking drugs, don’t panic. Find out the details of their drug taking - what they have taken, for how long and why. Speaking with a trained professional can help you decide what action to take. It’s good to talk...and listen! Talking about drugs and drug use can be difficult. You may feel uncomfortable talking about drugs because you don’t know enough about the subject. You may not be confident that you can talk to and influence the other person. You don’t have to do this alone, you can get further information and support. If someone you know is taking drugs or you think they are taking drugs: • Listen to them - it is important to understand and respect how they feel; • Keep the lines of communication open; and • Look for more information before you do anything.

Where can I get more information and support? - Dr. Matcheswalla’s Holistic Mental Health Care Contact No. (+91 22) 61841265 / 64537171 / 9820081884 / 9821119603 Email:dryamatcheswalla@hotmail.com Web: [www.drmatcheswalla.com](http://www.drmatcheswalla.com)

If you or someone you know needs immediate help: If you find someone drowsy or unconscious:

- Stay calm.
- Phone the emergency services at Dr. Matcheswalla Holistic Mental Health Care on (+91 22) 61841265 / 64537171 / 9820081884 / 9821119603
- Make sure their airway is clear.
- Turn them on their side and try not to leave them alone. Take care when turning them to avoid contact with needles or sharp objects.
- Give any powders, tablets or other things you find to the ambulance staff.
- Contact your local doctor
- Go to or phone the Casualty department of the nearest hospital.

## WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT DRUGS

There are five main kinds of drugs that can change your mood or how you behave. Most of these drugs come under a law called the 'Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Act, 1985' and the NDPS (amendment Bill) of 2014 . Drug laws are enforced by the Food and Drug Administration, the Narcotics Control Bureau or the Anti-narcotics Cell of the local police. They are known as 'controlled drugs' and are listed in different groups called schedules. Certain drugs come under the purview of the 'Misuse of drugs act (1971)'. The schedules group drugs according to how useful they are and what is needed to control their use. For example, a schedule covers drugs that have no medical use -drugs such as Heroin, LSD and 'designer drugs' such as ecstasy.

- **DEPRESSANTS**, such as alcohol and benzodiazepines (tranquilizers), can be used to calm the mind, relieve anxiety and can cause sleepiness. Sedatives and minor tranquilizers include the benzodiazepine drugs, such as valium. These are often prescribed to calm you down or to help you sleep at night. They have the same general effects as depressants but they cause addiction in a different way.
- **OPIATES / NARCOTICS**, also known as narcotic analgesics, are strong painkillers that produce feelings of euphoria (happiness) and sleepiness. The opiates include morphine, heroin and methadone.
- **CANNABINOIDS** such as marijuana change your perception of time and space and cause irreparable changes in your personality.
- **STIMULANTS** are drugs that make you feel more awake, alert, energetic and confident. Stimulant drugs include cocaine and amphetamines.
- **HALLUCINOGENS** are drugs that produce strange and intense visions called hallucinations. These drugs include LSD (acid), Phencyclidine Phosphate (PCP) and Magic Mushrooms.

Depressants and sedatives are sometimes called 'downers' and stimulant drugs are sometimes called 'uppers'.

Many drugs don't belong to just one type. For example, cannabis can have depressant effects as well as cause euphoria and ecstasy has both stimulant and hallucinogenic effects.

**ALCOHOL** People start drinking alcohol for reasons such as: - For Pleasure - To be sociable - To feel relaxed - To forget worries - To manage stress Out of the ten people who start drinking for such harmless reasons, two become physically dependent on and mentally addicted to alcohol. The World Health Organisation has given the following definition for Alcoholism: "Alcoholism is a primary, chronic disease with genetic, psychosocial and environmental factors influencing its development and manifestations. The disease is progressive and fatal. It is characterized by continuous or periodic impaired control over drinking, increased tolerance and preoccupation with alcohol and use of alcohol despite knowing the adverse consequences and distortions in thinking, most notably denial." Symptoms Alcoholism signs and symptoms include those below. You may: - Be unable to limit the amount of alcohol you drink - Feel a strong need or compulsion to drink - Develop tolerance to alcohol so that you need more to feel its effects - Drink alone or hide your drinking - Experience physical withdrawal symptoms – such as nausea, sweating and shaking – when you don't drink - Not remember conversations or commitments, sometimes referred to as a "black out" - Make a ritual of having drinks at certain times and become annoyed when this ritual is disturbed or questioned - Be irritable when your usual drinking time nears, especially if alcohol isn't available - Keep alcohol in unlikely places at home, at work or in your car - Gulp drinks, order doubles or become drunk intentionally to feel good, or drink to feel "normal" - Have legal problems or problems with relationships, employment or finances due to drinking - Lose interest in activities and hobbies that used to bring you pleasure - If you binge drink or have other problems with alcohol, you may have many of the signs and symptoms above, although you may not feel as much of a compulsion to drink compared with someone who has alcoholism. Also, you may not have physical withdrawal symptoms when you don't drink. But this pattern of drinking can still cause serious problems and lead to alcoholism. As with alcoholism, you may not be able to quit problem drinking without help. Short-term effects of alcohol Depending on how much is taken and the physical condition of the individual, alcohol can cause:

- Slurred speech
- Drowsiness
- Vomiting
- Diarrhea
- Upset stomach
- Headaches
- Breathing difficulties
- Distorted vision and hearing
- Impaired judgment
- Decreased perception and coordination
- Unconsciousness
- Anemia (loss of red blood cells)

- Coma
- Blackouts (memory lapses, where the drinker cannot remember events that occurred while under the influence).

Long-term effects of alcohol Binge drinking and continued alcohol use in large amounts are associated with many health problems, including:

- Unintentional injuries such as car crash, falls, burns, drowning
- Intentional injuries such as firearm injuries, sexual assault, domestic violence
- Increased on-the-job injuries and loss of productivity
- Increased family problems, broken relationships
- Alcohol poisoning
- High blood pressure, stroke, and other heart-related diseases
- Liver disease
- Nerve damage
- Sexual problems
- Permanent damage to the brain
- Vitamin B1 deficiency, which can lead to a disorder characterized by amnesia, apathy and disorientation
- Ulcers
- Gastritis (inflammation of stomach walls)
- Malnutrition
- Cancer of the mouth and throat

**CANNABIS / MARIJUANA** - Slang names, in its many forms, include Hash, Charas, Ganja , Bhang, MJ, Mary Jane, Skunk, Dope, Boom, Grass, Weed, Silavati, Manali, Manala, Bombay black.

Cannabis is a natural plant and is used in three main forms. The most common type is called resin, which comes as solid dark-coloured lumps or blocks. The second common form are the leaves and stalks of the plant, called grass or weed. The third kind is cannabis oil.

Cannabis is usually rolled with tobacco into a 'joint' or 'blunt' and smoked. It can also be cooked and eaten. Effects - Getting 'stoned' on cannabis makes you feel relaxed, talkative and happy. Some people feel time slows down and they also report a greater appreciation of colours, sounds and tastes. You can develop strong cravings for food called 'the munchies'. Side-effects - Cannabis can affect your memory and concentration and can leave you tired and lacking motivation. If you are not used to cannabis or you use a stronger type than you are used to you can feel anxiety, panic or confusion. You may have delusions or hallucinations.

Risks - Many people consider cannabis to be a relatively safe drug. But research shows that long-term users can find it hard to control their use of the drug and may become addicted. Smoking cannabis increases the risk of heart disease and cancers such as lung cancer and may also affect your fertility. In people who have underlying mental health problems, cannabis use may trigger schizophrenia. It is the second most common drug found in the systems of drivers, after alcohol.

**ECSTASY (MDMA)** Slang names include E, Doves, Mitsubishis, Shamrocks, Molly, MDMA.

Ecstasy is usually made in back-street laboratories. It is sold mainly as tablets which have different logos or designs on them. It is also found in crystalline form. Sometimes ecstasy tablets can contain other drugs and substances. Ecstasy is usually taken orally in pill, tablet or capsule form. Taking more than one at a time is called "bumping." The stimulative effects of drugs such as Ecstasy enable the user to dance for long periods, and when combined with the hot, crowded conditions found at raves, can lead to extreme dehydration and heart or kidney failure.

Effects - Ecstasy can make you feel more alert and in tune with your surroundings. You feel happy and calm and have a warm feeling towards other people. Sounds, colours and emotions are more intense. You have more energy which allows you to dance or be active for long periods of time.

Side-effects - Your body temperature, blood pressure and heart-rate can rise. Other physical effects include muscle pain, nausea, jaw stiffness and teeth grinding. You may experience severe sweating, shaking and palpitations. You can feel dehydrated, confused and tired.

Risks - Most legal drugs are tested on animals first, but ecstasy users are human guinea pigs. Research already shows that regular weekend users experience a mid-week 'crash' that can leave them feeling tired and depressed, often for days. It could be years before we know the long-term effects but some users may be at risk of developing mental health problems later in life. Deaths from ecstasy are quite rare, but can be due to heart attacks.

**HEROIN / BROWN SUGAR** Slang names include Smack, Junk, H, Skag, Dope, Gard, Brown and Chaw. Heroin is made from morphine, one of the drugs that comes from the opium poppy. It is used by injecting or by inhaling the fumes, known as 'chasing the dragon'.

Effects - Injecting heroin gives a quick rush of excitement followed by a peaceful, dreamlike feeling. You feel warm, relaxed and drowsy. Pain, aggression and your sex drive are all reduced.

Side-effects - The side-effects of heroin and other opiates (such as morphine and methadone) include constipation and weaker breathing. However, most of the dangers of heroin come from overdose and from injecting the drug.

Risks - What is sold on the streets as heroin often contains other substances, such as sugar, flour, talcum powder or other drugs. These substances may seem harmless, but if you inject them they can cause huge damage to your body, such as blood clots, abscesses and gangrene. HIV and Hepatitis B and C can be spread through sharing needles. Using heroin regularly will often lead to addiction, especially if you inject.

Methadone is used as a replacement drug to treat heroin addiction. It comes in the form of a green liquid or capsules, which you consume as prescribed by a competent person to keep away the cravings for heroin. The most serious risk from methadone is death by overdose.

**COCAINE** - Slang names include Coke, Snow, Toot, Blow, Nose candy, Liquid lady, Speedball, Crack and Rock Cocaine is a white powder made from the leaves of the coca plant, which grows mainly in South America. It is usually used by snorting the powder up the nose. 'Crack' is not a different drug but a more addictive form of cocaine. Crack, also called 'rock', 'stone' or 'free-base', is usually smoked. Cocaine is sometimes injected or eaten.

Effects - Cocaine is a powerful stimulant. It makes you feel more alert and energetic and also less hungry or thirsty. These effects can last for up to 20 minutes after each use. Smoking crack cocaine gives a shorter but more intense high.

Side-effects - Due to its powerful effects, cocaine users are often left craving more. Large doses can make you exhausted, anxious and depressed, and sometimes aggressive. Risks - Snorting cocaine can cause permanent damage to the inside of your nose. Cocaine use can damage your heart and lungs, and high doses can cause death from heart attacks or blood clots. Taking cocaine with alcohol increases the risk of heart attack and death. Eating cocaine can damage bowel tissue. The depression that follows the high can be severe and can lead to suicide attempts. With long-term or binge use, the excitement caused by cocaine can turn to restlessness, sleep loss and weight loss. Some people develop a paranoid psychosis where they may be violent. The strong cravings for cocaine, especially crack, can make

you want to take the drug all the time and you can lose control of your drug use.

**CRYSTAL METHAMPHETAMINE** –probably better known as “crystal meth”, “crystal” or just “meth”—is a white crystalline drug abused by people of all ages. Meth users experience a sudden “rush” of pleasure, strong feelings of confidence, hyperactivity and energy for as long twenty-four hours after taking the drug. The longer and intense “high” meth gives its user has increased the popularity of this dangerous drug. Methods of use include snorting (inhaling through the nose), injecting with a needle, smoking and simply eating the stuff. No matter the technique, meth is dangerous, addictive and eventually deadly.

Effects - The effects of crystal meth are similar to those of cocaine—but will last much longer. A few common short-term effects include: violent behavior, upset sleeping behavior, extreme mood swings and unpredictability, Increased blood pressure, irregular heart rate, suicidal thoughts, prolonged anxiety.

Side Effect - Brain damage, coma, stroke or death, distinct physical symptoms and physical, extreme weight loss, rapid tooth decay and cracked teeth, psychosis and hallucinations.

**AMPHETAMINE** Slang names include Speed, Whizz, Uppers, Button Amphetamines are a group of stimulant drugs, some of which were used in the past as slimming tablets. They usually come as a white-grey powder, sold in folded paper packages called ‘wraps’. They are usually swallowed but can also be injected or snorted. A type known as ‘ice’ or ‘crystal’ can be smoked.

Effects - These depend on how you take the drug. A small dose by mouth makes you feel more alert and energetic. Higher doses that you inject or smoke give a rush of pleasure. Some speed users go on binges and become overactive and talkative.

Side-effects - As with other stimulant drugs, you experience a crash after the high caused by the drug. High doses of amphetamines can cause panic, paranoia and hallucinations. With long-term use, you can develop a condition known as ‘amphetamine psychosis’, with symptoms like schizophrenia. The paranoia can cause you to become violent if you believe you are being threatened or persecuted.

Risks - Amphetamine psychosis can continue long after you have stopped using the drug. If you become aggressive or violent, you could get into



dangerous situations. The risks from injecting are the same as other drugs, such as heroin.

**SOLVENTS** - inhalents Slang name glue, shoe polish, gasoline, toluene, poppers, Solvents include products found in most homes, such as glues, paint thinner, nail polish remover, lighter fuels and aerosol sprays such as deodorants. You can inhale directly into your mouth. Solvent abuse is most common among teenagers. For most teenagers it is a passing fad, but it can cause them huge problems at school and at home.

Effects - Inhaling solvents can give a high or 'buzz' which is like feeling drunk. The effects usually wear off after about half an hour. You may look drunk, with slurred speech, staggering, giggling and lack of control and you can feel drowsy afterwards.

Side-effects - Your judgment can be affected and you can become aggressive. Hallucinations, vomiting and blackouts are also common. You usually have a hangover after use, with headache and poor concentration.

Risks - Death from solvent abuse is rare but it can happen for a number of reasons and can happen the first time you do it. Under the influence of solvents you are more likely to have accidents. You may also choke or suffocate - on the solvent you spray into your lungs, on your vomit or on the materials you use to help inhale the solvent. Many solvents can also cause heart failure.

**POPPERS** - an inhalant Chemical names are amyl nitrite, butyl nitrite. Poppers are chemicals that come in liquid form, usually in small bottles. You inhale the vapour from the bottle through your nose.

Effects - Poppers cause a rush that lasts for about five minutes. Your blood pressure falls and your heart pumps faster. You may feel an increase in sexual arousal and a greater sense of enjoyment of music and dancing.

Side-effects - These drugs can make you feel sick and dizzy, and sometimes cause blackouts. Risks - Poppers are especially dangerous for people with heart or breathing problems. The liquid can be poisonous if you swallow it.

**LSD** Slang name Acid, Dots, Blotting Paper, Cork or Tabs in or on small squares of paper or cardboard. Tabs usually have pictures or logos on them. You swallow the tabs.

Effects - LSD is a hallucinogenic drug. About one hour after taking a tab, it causes a 'trip' where your surroundings look different, with colours, sounds

and objects appearing unreal or abnormal. During a trip you may have visions and hear voices and time seems to slow down or speed up. The effects can last for around 12 hours.

Side-effects - It's hard to predict what kind of trip you will have. During a bad trip, you may feel terrified, feel you are losing control, going mad or dying. A bad trip is more likely if you are already feeling anxious or depressed before taking the drug.

Risks - A bad trip can trigger mental illness in some people. Good trips can also be dangerous, for example if you believe you can fly or walk on water. You can also get flashbacks, where you feel you are back on a trip for a short period of time, during the weeks and months after a trip. These flashbacks can be distressing.

### **OTHER DRUGS ASSOCIATED WITH THE PARTYING OR CLUBBING**

**SCENE** = Psilocybin Magic mushrooms are hallucinogenic mushrooms, also known as 'shrooms' that grow in the wild. You can eat them raw or cooked or made into a tea. The effects of magic mushrooms are similar to a mild, shorter LSD trip. As with LSD, you can have bad trips that could be frightening. There is also the risk that you might eat poisonous mushrooms by mistake, thinking they are magic mushrooms.

**KETAMINE** - Slang names include Vitamin K, Special K, Kit-Kat. Ketamine is a powerful tranquillizer and anaesthetic used on animals. You can take it as a tablet or snort it as a powder. Ketamine is available in injectable form, too. It causes hallucinations, aggressive behaviour, blackouts and temporary blindness.

**GHB** - Chemical names are sodium oxybate or gammahydroxybutyrate. Slang names include GHB, liquid ecstasy. Despite the slang name of liquid ecstasy, GHB is a totally different chemical to ecstasy with different effects. It is an anaesthetic drug that can very quickly make you unconscious.

**YABA** - Yaba is a combination of methamphetamine (a powerful and addictive stimulant) and caffeine. Yaba, which means crazy medicine in Thai, is produced in Southeast and East Asia. Effects - Rapid heart rate, increased blood pressure, and damage to the small blood vessels in the brain that can lead to stroke. Chronic use of the drug can result in inflammation of the heart lining. Overdoses can cause hyperthermia (elevated body temperature), convulsions, and death. Individuals who use Yaba also may have episodes of violent behaviour, paranoia, anxiety, confusion and insomnia. Side effects - Although most users administer Yaba orally, those who inject the drug expose themselves to additional risks,

including contracting HIV (human immunodeficiency virus), hepatitis B and C, and other blood-borne viruses.

**TRANQUILIZERS** - The many prescription drugs that slow the activity of the central nervous system are called sedative-hypnotics. They include the barbiturates, general anesthetics, anti-anxiety tranquillizers (eg, benzodiazepines) and a number of non-barbiturate sedatives. These substances are prescribed to relieve anxiety, to induce sleep, to prevent or treat epileptic seizures, or to produce surgical anesthesia. All can create dependence in some individuals. The benzodiazepines being sold in India are Diazepam, Chlordiazepoxide, Oxazepam, Flurazepam, Midazolam, Triazolam, Alprazolam, Lorazepam, Nitrazepam, Clonazepam, Estizolam, Flunitrazepam. Physicians agree that these drugs are safe for short-term uses (i.e, less than 4 weeks), but there is a high abuse potential and dependence. These should be used strictly under medical supervision. Effects - sedation, drowsiness /dizziness. Overdose of tranquilizers can lead to death.

**MEPHEDRONE** - Mephedrone, known as Meow Meow, M-Cat, can come in the form of capsules, tablets or white powder that can be swallowed, snort, injected, smoked or used rectally. Mephedrone can cause various unintended side effects including: dilated pupils, poor concentration, teeth grinding, problems focusing visually, poor short-term memory, hallucinations, delusions, and erratic behaviour. They noted the most severe effects appear to be linked with high doses or prolonged usage, and the effects may be due to users taking other intoxicants at the same time. Other effects noted include changes in body temperature, increased heart rate, breathing difficulties, loss of appetite, increased sweating, discolouration of extremities, anxiety, paranoia and depression. When snorted, it can also cause nose bleeds and nose burns. Long term use leads to hallucinations, agitation, excitability and mania. Deaths have been known to occur due to overdose.