



Victim Services of Waterloo Region

Fact Sheet on Types of Drugs pt. 1

Types of Drugs

When most people think of drugs they think of two kinds – legal and illegal. However, there are six main types of drugs: Hallucinogens, Central Nervous System Depressants, Stimulants, Cannabis, Antidepressants and Anabolic Steroids.

Hallucinogens

These are drugs that effect perception, emotions and mental processes. Capable of causing hallucinations, users can feel as though they are in the middle of a dream, or a nightmare. Though they were once used to treat some psychiatric disorders, there is no longer a medical use for these drugs. While LSD was once the most popular hallucinogen, MDMA (ecstasy) is now extremely popular at dance clubs and raves and has led to deaths due to overheating and dehydration. Some examples of hallucinogens are:

- ❑ PCP (angel dust, elephant, hog)
- ❑ Psilocybin (magic mushrooms, shrooms)
- ❑ Mescaline
- ❑ Peyote
- ❑ PMA
- ❑ 2CB or 2-CB or 2C-B
- ❑ DMT
- ❑ LSD (acid, blotter)
- ❑ MDMA (ecstasy, E, X, Adam, euphoria, XTC)
- ❑ MDA
- ❑ STP or DOM
- ❑ DOB (nexus, bromo, toonies, hyrox, synergy)

Central Nervous System Depressants

These drugs slow down the central nervous system, and can lead to feelings of calmness, drowsiness and well-being. If used in large doses they can lead to extreme intoxication, unconsciousness, coma and death. If two or more of these drugs are combined their effect is amplified, and can be extremely dangerous. Use of these drugs can lead to physical and psychological dependence. There are four types of central nervous system depressants: opioid analgesics, alcohol and solvents/inhalants, benzodiazepines and barbiturates/other sleeping pills/other psychotropic drugs.

Opioid Analgesics:

Highly addictive painkillers that may give a sense of well-being. Natural or synthetic, when taken with other CNS drugs can lead to intense effects and/or death. Some medical uses, should be used under doctor supervision only.

- ❑ Codeine
- ❑ Morphine
- ❑ Heroin (H, smack, horse, junk)
- ❑ Hydromorphone (Dilaudid)
- ❑ Butalbital with Codeine
- ❑ Opium
- ❑ Methadone (dollies)
- ❑ Meperidine or Pethidine (Demerol)
- ❑ Oxycodone (Percodan, percs)
- ❑ Fiorinal-O
- ❑ ASA and Codeine



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- ❑ Hydrocodone (Novahistex DH, Expectorant)

- ❑ Pentazocine (Talwin, Ritalin)

capable of causing extreme dependency with regular use.

- ❑ Seconal
- ❑ Amytal
- ❑ Imovane
- ❑ Nembutal
- ❑ Tuinal
- ❑ GHB (liquid ecstasy)

Alcohol, Inhalants and Solvents:

Alcohol produces relaxation and disinhibition, but in high doses can cause intoxication, impaired judgment/coordination, and coma or death. Found in beer, wine, spirits, and in liquid over-the-counter medications and products.

Inhalants produce lightheadedness, euphoria, exhilaration and vivid fantasies. Slows down breathing, can cause brain damage, asphyxiation or death.

Also known as volatile solvents, because of their ability to evaporate into air, there are three categories: solvents (cleaning fluids, glues, paint thinners and removers), gases (aerosol propellants – paint, hair and deodorant sprays, gasoline, anesthetic gases) and nitrites (amyl and butyl nitrate).

Benzodiazepines:

At low doses can produce feelings of calm and well-being. Similar to barbiturates in effect, can lead to unconsciousness. Seldom fatal unless combined with other drugs. Prescribed for relief from anxiety/panic disorder, sleep problems, muscle tenseness, seizures and alcohol withdrawal symptoms.

- ❑ Valium
- ❑ Ativan
- ❑ Restoril
- ❑ Rohypnol (date rape drug)
- ❑ Serax
- ❑ Xanax
- ❑ Dalmane
- ❑ Haldon

Barbiturates:

Replaced largely by benzodiazepines, these drugs produce feelings of calm, drowsiness and well-being. Formerly used as sleeping pills, can cause severe intoxication, unconsciousness, coma and death in large doses. Life threatening if combined with another CNS drug, and

Stimulants

These drugs speed up or excite the central nervous system. Used to increase alertness, endurance, decrease appetite, keep people awake and to produce feelings of well-being and euphoria. Used to treat narcolepsy, attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder, Parkinson's Disease and obesity. Can produce severe psychological dependence. Some stimulants, such as caffeine and nicotine, can produce physical dependence.

- ❑ Cocaine (coke, snow, nose candy etc.)
- ❑ Methamphetamine (speed, crystal meth, ice, crank)
- ❑ Khat (qat, kat)
- ❑ Tenuate
- ❑ Caffeine
- ❑ Crack (a free-base form of cocaine)
- ❑ Dexedrine
- ❑ Methcathinone (cat)
- ❑ Ritalin
- ❑ Ionamin
- ❑ Tobacco/Nicotine

Cannabis

These drugs include marijuana, hashish and hash oil. One of the most widely used illegal drugs available, cannabis is essentially a hallucinogen that produces depressant effects and increased heart rate.

Please see part 2 of this fact sheet for information on antidepressants, anabolic steroids, and for resources regarding drug types, abuse and detoxification.



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