

FACTS ABOUT AMPHETAMINE

WHAT IS AMPHETAMINE?

Also known as speed, uppers, ice, crystal meth, whiz, whip, rock, goey, base, paste, dexies, meth Amphetamines are stimulant drugs. They take the forms of powder, tablets, capsules, crystal or paste. Use can be legal or illegal. Examples include:

- dexamphetamine - used legally to treat attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) or narcolepsy (a sleep disorder that makes it hard to stay awake)
- amphetamine sulphate, known commonly in illicit use as "speed"
- methamphetamine, known commonly in illicit use as "crystal", "meth", or "ice"
- used illegally to enhance performance in sports etc.

EFFECTS OF ALCOHOL

Effects depend on the person (age, weight, size, health and tolerance), as well as the strength, the amount taken, and if taken with other drugs, including alcohol. When swallowed (effects are felt in about 30 minutes), injecting (almost immediately) and snorting (3 to 5 minutes). As it wears off, you may experience "comedown" effects, which can last 2 to 3 days.

Short-term effects, both desired and undesired, may include...

- euphoria, pleasure and confidence
- increased energy, stamina, concentration and sex drive
- heightened alertness, self-awareness and visual awareness
- more talkative and social, laugh more
- enlarged pupils, increased heart rate and faster breathing
- teeth grinding, reduced appetite, dry mouth and dehydration
- difficulty sleeping, restless, irritable, suspicious, angrier
- nosebleeds and nasal passage damage (from snorting)
- tetanus, infection, vein damage, Hepatitis B or C, HIV, AIDS (from injecting or sharing needles).

Long-term effects may include...

- delusional, paranoia, mood swings, depression, anxiety, more violent
- severe weight loss, missing and rotted teeth, skin sores, twitching
- repeated infections (colds and flus), increased risk of stroke, heart or kidney problems
- amphetamines dependence.

OVERDOSE

Effects from overdosing: chills or fever, chest pain or irregular or increased heart rate, difficulty breathing or urinating, fits or seizures (uncontrolled jerking), extreme agitation and confusion, paranoia, kidney damage, stroke, unconscious, heart attack or death.

If a person is experiencing an overdose or is unresponsive call 000 for an ambulance. If unconscious, put them in the recovery position. If not breathing, start CPR. Paramedics won't involve police unless the person is a danger to themselves or others.

HOW LONG DO AMPHETAMINES STAY IN YOUR SYSTEM?

Depends on use and person. Effects generally last 6 to 12 hours. They can be detected in saliva 2 to 4 days, in urine 3 to 5 days, in blood up to 3 days and in hair up to 3 months.

TIPS FOR REDUCING RISK

There is no safe way to use amphetamines. There will always be a health risk. The only way to be safe is not to use. If you choose to use, the following will help reduce risk:

Before: take a friend and tell them what you plan on using, plan how to get home (to avoid driving under the influence), use new or clean equipment (boil equipment to clean it). Injecting is not recommended, though if choosing to inject, get your own clean, sharp syringe and find a clean location.

During: go slow, start with a low dose then wait an hour to see effects before having a bit more, know and keep to your limits. Safely dispose of syringes.

Avoid: using amphetamines with other drugs, including alcohol, using too much or too often, needle or equipment sharing. While using don't be alone, don't do risky activities or be responsible for the care of others.

ARE AMPHETAMINES BECOMING A PROBLEM?

It may be a problem if you agree with any of these statements:

- I struggle to limit or reduce the amount of amphetamines I'm using
- I spend a lot of time using amphetamines or affected by it
- I often feel strong urges to use amphetamines
- I'm unable to perform tasks at work, school or home due to use of amphetamines
- I have developed a tolerance to amphetamines, so I need to have more to feel effects
- I have withdrawal symptoms – aches and pains, tired and difficulty sleeping, increased appetite, confused, irritable, anxious, depressed or paranoia.

TIPS FOR AMPHETAMINE USE

- seek support from a health professional, as well as from family and friends
- avoid people, places, objects, feelings or situations associated with using amphetamines
- start doing activities you enjoy that don't involve using amphetamines
- look after yourself – get enough sleep, follow a healthy diet, adopt a balanced lifestyle
- set some personal goals.

AMPHETAMINES AND THE LAW

It is illegal to use, possess, make or sell amphetamines in Australia, for purposes other than prescribed medicinal use. It is also illegal to possess any implement for using amphetamines (such as a pipe). In Queensland, it is illegal to possess needles or syringes if they are not disposed of safely and therefore pose a risk to others.

FOR SUPPORT – CALL DRUG ARM

CALL DRUG ARM CENTRAL INTAKE ON 07 3620 8880 DURING BUSINESS HOURS TO ACCESS FREE SUPPORT OR EMAIL INTAKE@DRUGARM.COM.AU. FOR GENERAL INQUIRIES, CALL 1300 656 800 OR EMAIL INFO@DRUGARM.COM.AU.

FOR 24/7 SUPPORT CALL:

ALCOHOL & DRUG INFORMATION SERVICE: 1800 177 833 (QLD) AND 1800 250 015 (NATIONAL).