

FACTS ABOUT HALLUCINOGENS

WHAT ARE HALLUCINOGENS / LSD

Also known as psychedelics, acid, trips, cubes, liberty caps, liberties, zen, dots, battery acid, looney toons, superman, magic mushrooms, mushies, shrooms, Lucy, California sunshine, blotter, cid, microdot, tabs, Sally, sage, magic mint, angel dust.

They are a group of drugs which alter a person's perception, mood and thought, and may cause hallucinations – where people see, hear, smell, taste or touch things that aren't there. Being under the influence of these drugs is known as "tripping".

Synthetic hallucinogens include:

- lysergic acid diethylamide (LSD)
- ketamine
- and phencyclidine (PCP).

Natural hallucinogens include:

- psilocybin (magic mushrooms)
- dimethyltryptamine (DMT)
- datura
- mescaline
- ayahuasca
- and salvia.

EFFECTS OF LSD

It depends on the type and its form. Mostly LSD comes in the form of a square of gelatine or blotting paper, dipped or soaked in the drug, which is placed under the tongue. It also can be a liquid, tablet or capsule. It can be swallowed, sniffed, injected or smoked. Magic mushrooms look like dried mushrooms, or can be capsules. They are usually eaten fresh, cooked or brewed into a tea.

Effects depend on the person (age, weight, size, health and tolerance), as well as the strength, amount taken, and if taken with other drugs, including alcohol. Once LSD is swallowed, effects are felt within 20 to 45 minutes and last about 12 hours. Comedown effects usually last 1 to 3 days.

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

- more intense senses, distorted sense of time and space
- rapidly changing and intense emotions
- hallucinations, altered state of thinking, sense of floating
- enlarged pupils, muscle twitching, flushes, sweats, chills
- dizziness, nausea and vomiting
- confusion, headaches, difficulty sleeping
- increased heart rate and blood pressure, faster breathing, poor coordination
- a "bad trip" can result in extreme anxiety and paranoia, frightening hallucinations, panic that could lead to risky behaviour and sense of losing control.

Long-term effects may include...

- flashbacks (effects of drug can suddenly come on again for a minute or two – this can happen days, weeks, months or years later), damage to memory and concentration, depression, anxiety and schizophrenia
- psychological dependence.

OVERDOSE

Effects from overdosing: taking too much can lead to a "bad trip". If at risk due to panic or frightening hallucinations, or if experiencing frequent vomiting, fever, seizures, trouble breathing or suicidal thoughts or behaviours, 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 DOES LSD STAY IN YOUR SYSTEM?

Depends on use and person. It can be detected in urine 2 to 4 days, in blood 6 to 12 hours and in hair up to 90 days.

TIPS FOR REDUCING RISK

There is no safe way to use LSD. 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), be in an agreeable mood, plan a comfortable, familiar location – you may need to change environment if experiencing negative effects. 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 to see effects before having a bit more, know and keep to your limits, too much can lead to a “bad trip”. Safely dispose of syringes.

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

IS LSD USE 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 LSD I'm using
- I spend a lot of time using LSD or affected by it
- I'm unable to perform tasks at work, school or home due to LSD use
- I have developed a tolerance to LSD, so I need to have more to feel effects
- I have withdrawal symptoms – anxiety, confusion, poor concentration, flashbacks.

TIPS FOR PROBLEMATIC LSD USE

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

LSD AND THE LAW

In Australia, from 1 February 2018, medicines containing codeine were no longer legally permitted to be purchased over-the-counter at pharmacies without a doctor's prescription. It is illegal to use or possess codeine without a prescription from a doctor, or to sell or give codeine to someone else for recreational use.

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).