

# HEADS UP REAL NEWS ABOUT DRUGS AND YOUR BODY



Reading /Science

## How Common Drugs of Abuse Harm

This chart details the effects and risks associated with the more common drugs of abuse. Study the chart to answer the questions in the Pop Quiz below.

| Drug                   | Effects on the Body   | Risks   |
|------------------------|---|---|
| <b>CIGARETTES</b>      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>stimulate and sedate the central nervous system</li> <li>cause kidneys to secrete epinephrine, a stress hormone</li> </ul>                                     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>can cause lung and heart disease, and cancer</li> <li>smoking while pregnant can cause birth defects</li> </ul>  |
| <b>COCAINE</b>         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>central nervous system stimulant</li> <li>releases brain chemical dopamine</li> <li>temporarily increases energy</li> </ul>                                    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>can cause fatal heart and lung failure, seizures, and strokes</li> <li>sharing needles to inject a liquid form of the drug increases risk of contracting HIV, Hepatitis B and C, and other infectious diseases</li> </ul>  |
| <b>ECSTASY</b>         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>overstimulates serotonin-producing nerve cells</li> <li>creates short-term feelings of pleasure and increases energy</li> </ul>                                | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>can cause nausea, fainting, and depression</li> <li>long-term use can cause memory problems and learning disabilities</li> <li>can cause a potentially fatal heat condition called hyperthermia</li> </ul>   |
| <b>HEROIN</b>          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>central nervous system depressant</li> <li>induces euphoria by releasing endorphins, hormones that block pain and anxiety</li> </ul>                           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>can cause vomiting, respiratory failure, pneumonia, and miscarriage</li> <li>chronic users may develop collapsed veins, heart infections, and liver disease</li> <li>sharing needles to inject heroin increases risk of contracting HIV, Hepatitis B and C, and other infectious diseases</li> </ul> |
| <b>INHALANTS</b>       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>stimulate the brain to give a temporary head rush, or high</li> <li>some inhalants dilate blood vessels, causing the heart to pump dangerously fast</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>can damage the cardiovascular and nervous systems, causing headache, nausea, slurred speech, loss of coordination, and breathing difficulties</li> <li>can cause depression and memory loss</li> <li>can cause death from suffocation and heart failure</li> </ul>                                   |
| <b>MARIJUANA</b>       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>active ingredient THC creates feelings of mild euphoria and relaxation</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>affects memory and coordination</li> <li>long-term use may cause lung disease</li> </ul>   |
| <b>METHAMPHETAMINE</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>causes the release of high levels of the brain chemical dopamine, which creates an intense rush and feelings of euphoria</li> </ul>                            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>can cause insomnia, confusion, tremors, convulsions, and aggressive behavior</li> <li>can damage blood vessels, cause respiratory problems, and irregular heartbeat</li> <li>damage to brain cells, over time, can result in a severe movement disorder</li> </ul>                                   |
| <b>STEROIDS</b>        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>disrupt normal hormonal balance</li> <li>can draw out masculine traits</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>can cause aching joints, swollen feet, acne, balding, skin to yellow</li> <li>can stunt a teen's growth</li> <li>boys can develop breasts</li> <li>girls may sprout facial hair</li> <li>risk of heart failure and liver cancer</li> </ul>   |

### POP QUIZ

- How do steroids affect a user's appearance? Give two examples.
- What are the risks of sharing needles to inject drugs?
- Why is the common smoker's excuse "Smoking relaxes me" not true?
- Which systems do inhalants damage?
- Which hormone blocks pain and anxiety?