



# FAQs on Cocaine

## 1. WHAT IS COCAINE?

Cocaine is a very addictive drug that is sold illegally in form of a fine, white, crystalline powder. This drug's many street names include coke, snow, blow, toot, and rock.

## 2. WHERE DOES IT COME FROM?

Cocaine is made from the leaves of the coca plant.

## 3. HOW IS IT USED?

It is snorted through the nostrils in powder form. It may also be injected into the veins in a liquid form.

## 4. HOW IS CRACK DIFFERENT FROM COCAINE?

Crack is the crystallized or freebase form of cocaine, and it is usually smoked in a pipe.

## 5. WHY IS COCAINE DANGEROUS?

Cocaine is an addictive stimulant that speeds up your heart and causes your blood vessels to narrow. Cocaine use can cause heart attacks, stroke, dangerously high body temperature (hyperthermia), and serious breathing problems—any of which can result in death.

## 6. WHAT DOES COCAINE DO TO YOUR BRAIN?

Dopamine is one brain chemical or neurotransmitter that stimulates the brain reward pathway, which makes a person feel pleasure. When cocaine gets in the brain, it causes a buildup of dopamine.

## 7. WHAT'S WRONG WITH A BUILDUP OF DOPAMINE?

The buildup of dopamine is bad because it causes an extra sense of pleasure for a short time. This leads to two problems. First, your brain is wired to want to repeat activities that lead to pleasure.

Second, users may lose the ability to experience pleasure without cocaine—and may also need more and more of the drug just to keep from feeling bad.

