

METHAMPHETAMINE

Is a highly addictive stimulant drug that produces a rapid high, coupled with a rapid ‘crash’ causing a cyclical pattern of use that can last days, continuing until the drug is gone, often foregoing food and or sleep.

FACTS:

- Meth can have a variety of colors including: clear or yellowish crystalline appearance or be a white powder, depending on how it’s processed.
- Meth can be made from household products, some of which are now controlled making ‘home labs’ more difficult.
- Meth is commonly used by mixing it with other substances (MDMA, Molly, or ecstasy) and calling it by that name. Dealers call it a ‘meth bomb’. Most ecstasy today is as much as 80% meth.
- Although research is scarce, it appears that kids who have been prescribed stimulants, usually for ADD, are more likely to abuse stimulants like meth.
- In long term users, studies have indicated deficits in attention, working memory and decision making.
- Both amphetamine and methamphetamine were originally developed, like many drugs of abuse, to be medically useful. Amphetamines were originally utilized as a decongestant, and diet aid with methamphetamine being used for focus and attention (extensively by the military in both World War I and II). It was only recognized in the 1960’s and 1970’s for the addictive potential.

PHYSICAL EFFECTS:

Short Term Effects

- increased wakefulness and physical activity
- decreased appetite
- faster breathing
- rapid and/or irregular heartbeat
- increased blood pressure and body temperature
- dilated pupils
- chemical odor

Long Term Effects

- extreme weight loss
- severe dental problems ("meth mouth")
- intense itching, leading to skin sores from scratching
- anxiety and or confusion
- sleeping problems
- violent behavior
- *paranoia*—extreme and unreasonable distrust of others
- *hallucinations*—sensations and images that seem real though they aren't

METHODS OF INGESTION:

- inhaling/smoking
- snorting

- swallowing (pill)
- injecting the powder that has been dissolved in water/alcohol

COMMON SIGNS OF USE:

- Relationship problems
- Mood swings
- Trouble with the police

- Changes to eating patterns leading to poor nutrition
- Reduced interaction with family
- Unexplained need for money
- Declining school/work performance

- Sleep disturbance
- Explosive outbursts
- Sudden change of friends

OVERDOSE EFFECTS:

- Hyperactivity/sweating
- Difficulty passing urine
- Shaking/trembling/spasms
- Rapid breathing/feeling that you can't breathe

- Chest pain/pounding heart
- Raised temperature
- Disorientation
- Paranoid, delusional, irritable, anxious or psychotic behavior

- Severe Headache
- Convulsions

Drug use problems can be complex and often vary from person to person. It is important to note that the information provided is to be used as a guide only and may not be suitable for your own situation.

Sources:

NIDA. (2018, June 6). Methamphetamine. Retrieved from <https://www.drugabuse.gov/publications/drugfacts/methamphetamine> on 2018, September 24
<https://positivechoices.org.au/parents/methamphetamine-factsheet/pdf/>