

A parent's guide to the dangers

Home Office figures show that the number of persons aged 17-21 found guilty of drug abuse has more than doubled since 1988. An estimated 60 per cent of 14-15 year olds have been offered drugs – most commonly cannabis or LSD – and a third have tried them



Ecstasy

'E', disco burgers, MDMA, Dennis the Menace. Tablets or pills – drug of the rave scene. **Creates euphoria and feelings of love. Can increase heart rate, blood pressure and body temperature – cause heat stroke, seizures and coma**

Cannabis

Pot, Dope, Hash, Grass.

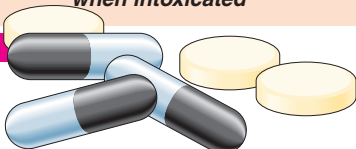
Hard brown resinous material or herbal mixture. Smoked in a reefer or pipe, often mixed with tobacco

The most commonly used illegal drug. Users may appear 'drunk', giggly and talkative. Impaired alertness presents risk of accidents when intoxicated

Amphetamines

Speed, Purple Hearts.

White or brown powder, capsules or pills. Usually sniffed or injected. Sometimes taken with Ecstasy. **Users appear lively, over-alert and giggly. Depression and difficulty with sleep may follow and heavy use can result in feelings of persecution**

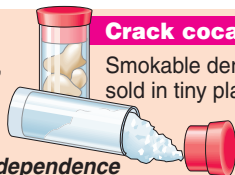


Cocaine

Coke, Snow. White powder, usually sniffed but can be injected or smoked. **Similar to amphetamines but more likely to lead to dependence**

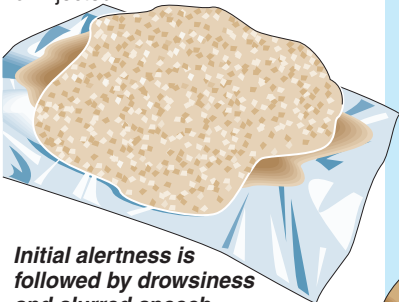
Crack cocaine

Smokable derivative of cocaine. Whitish chips sold in tiny plastic vials or cooking-film 'wraps'. **Causes intense euphoria followed by craving, can cause severe depression**



Heroin

Smack, Skag. White or speckled brown powder. Usually heated on silver foil and inhaled. Can be sniffed or injected.



Initial alertness is followed by drowsiness and slurred speech. Overdose can produce unconsciousness. Regular use leads to dependence. Withdrawal produces severe flu-like symptoms and cramps

LSD

Acid, strawberries, Chinese dragon.

Small coloured tablets, micro spots on blotting paper or multi-coloured impregnated stamps. Dissolved on tongue.

Hallucinations vary from visions of joy to waking nightmares. May trigger psychotic response in susceptible person

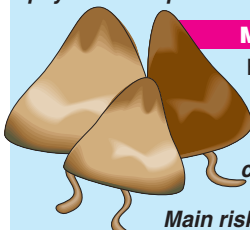


Magic mushrooms

Found growing wild in many parts of Britain. Eaten fresh or dried.

Similar effects to cannabis. May cause hallucinations

Main risk comes from eating other poisonous mushrooms



Other opioids

Dikes, 118s, Barbiturates.

May include red or white tablets, capsules, or ampoules. Swallowed or injected

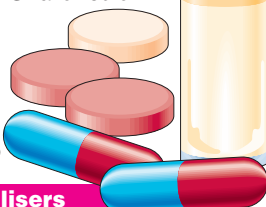
Similar effects to heroin but less addictive

Tranquillisers

Valium, Ativan, Librium.

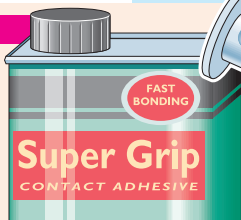
Prescribed tablets and capsules taken illegally for kicks.

Effects similar to alcohol



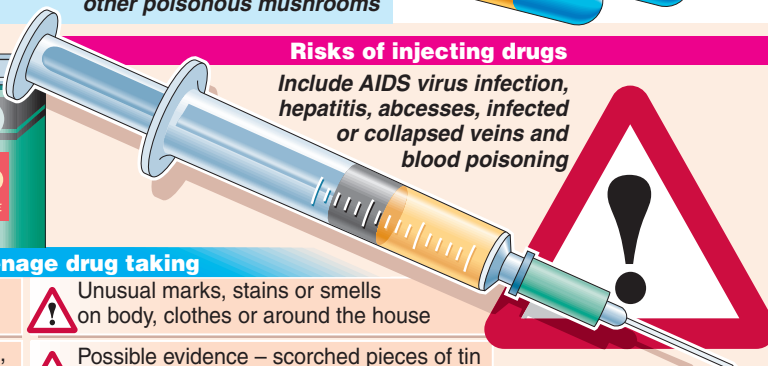
Solvents

Solvent-based glues, butane lighter fuel, aerosol sprays, paint thinners, petrol. **Loss of coordination, blurred vision, hallucination. Can cause heart failure**



Risks of injecting drugs

Include AIDS virus infection, hepatitis, abscesses, infected or collapsed veins and blood poisoning



Tell-tale signs that can reveal teenage drug taking

! Sudden changes of mood, becoming aggressive, unusually drowsy or sleepy

! Loss of appetite, loss of interest in school, hobbies, sport, friends etc

! Unusual marks, stains or smells on body, clothes or around the house

! Possible evidence – scorched pieces of tin foil, homemade pipes, cigarette papers

Source: DoH © GRAPHIC NEWS

Where to go for help:

If you cannot find a specialist drug service locally contact **SCODA** (Standing Conference on Drug Abuse). 1 Hatton Place, Hatton Garden, London EC1N 8ND. Telephone: **071-430 2341**.

'Dial and listen' list of drug agencies: Dial 100 and ask for **Freephone Drug Problems. Adfam** – Confidential helpline: **071-405 3923**. **Families Anonymous** – Self-help support group: **071-281 8889**. **Release** – 24-hour emergency telephone service: **071-603 8654**.