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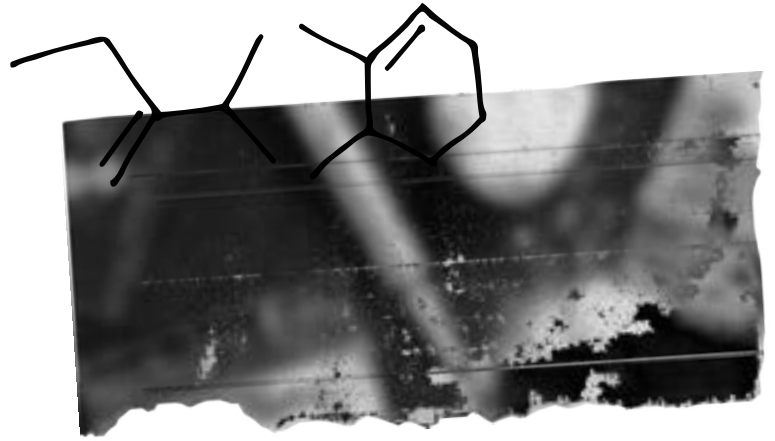
"One thing, ruins Everything"

Drugs Use Effects and Prevention



In this guide, you will find:

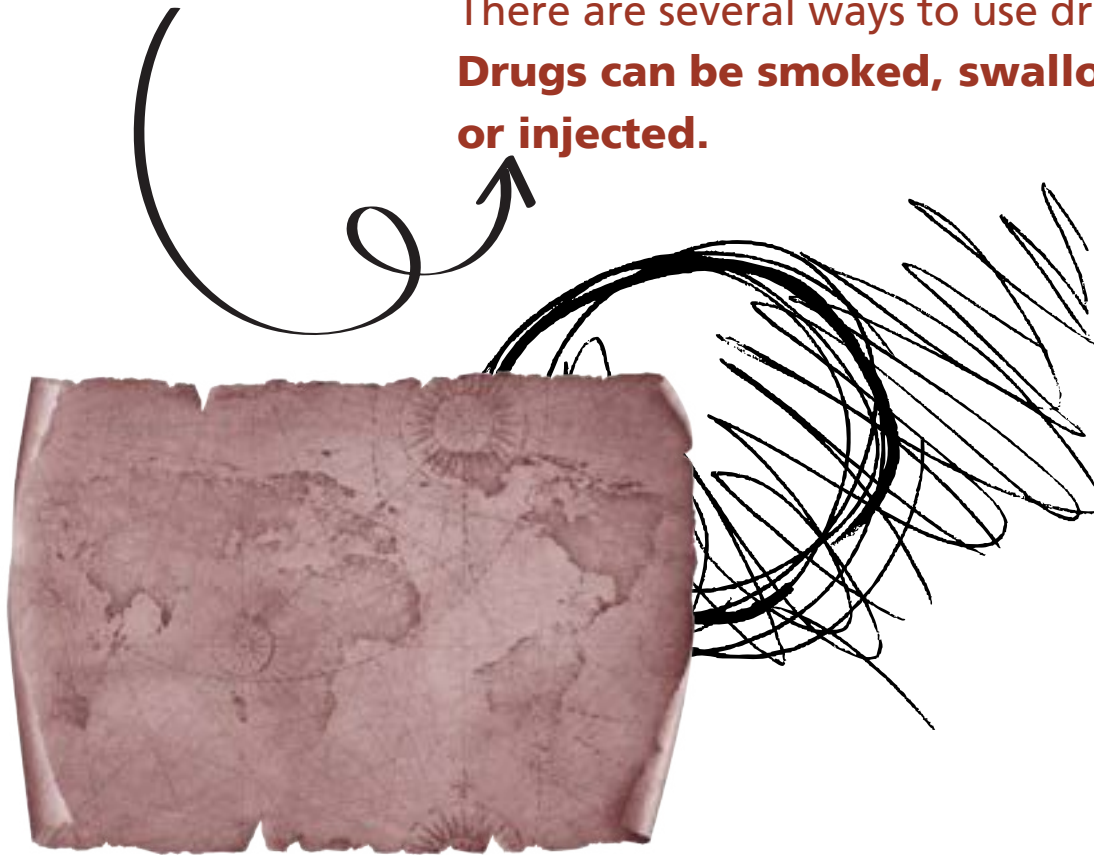
- **What are drugs?**
- **Are the repercussions of drugs limited to drug users only?**
- **Types of drugs**
 - Sedatives
 - Stimulants
 - Hallucinogens
- **Most common used types of drugs**
 - Hashish
 - Captagon
 - Shabu
- **Misuse of prescription medications**
 - What are prescription medications?
 - Most popular misused prescription medications
- **Is prescription medication addiction less harmful than drug addiction?**
- **Can someone become an addict if they use drugs from time to time?**
- **What is the difference between tolerance, dependence, and addiction?**
- **Physical, psychological, financial and social effects**
- **Common misconceptions about drugs**



What are drugs?

They are toxic plants or compounds that **alter the individual's** mental, physical and psychological **state**, affecting their thoughts, emotions, behaviors, understanding, and feelings. This is why drugs are dangerous and unpredictable.

There are several ways to use drugs:
Drugs can be smoked, swallowed, inhaled or injected.



How were drugs discovered?

Opium and cocaine were the first types of drugs to be used over time and were initially utilized as treatment. However, as time went on, their damages to health became known, as well as how addictive they are, to the point that they had to be taken daily. Consequently, individuals and communities suffered major adverse effects.

Are drug abusers solely affected by the repercussions of drugs?

Drugs alter the lives of the ones abusing them, their families, and the community as a whole. Drugs have many effects, including:

- **Health effects**

Such as diseases, overdose and death

- **Social effects**

Such as violence, crime, and traffic accidents

- **Economic effects**

Such as the burden and costs of healthcare, whether for the individual or the healthcare provider



Drug abuse leads to several health, psychological, financial and social issues, such as aggressiveness, hallucination, schizophrenia, deterioration of the financial status, and isolation.

Studies have indicated that **nearly 44%** of drivers involved in traffic accidents were using drugs

Some types of drugs may weaken and slow one's reactions, as well as their ability to focus and make a sound judgement. Others may increase recklessness and aggressiveness, which can increase exposure to and causing of car accidents.



Types of drugs

● Sedatives

Sedatives slow down the natural messages between the brain and the body, **thus affecting:**

● Focus level and motor skills

● Consciousness and awareness of one's surroundings

Sedatives cause drowsiness, nausea, vomiting, unconsciousness, and may lead to death if taken in high doses.

● Stimulants

As opposed to sedatives, stimulants cause an abnormal increase in natural messages transmitted from the brain to other body organs, **thus leading to:**

● Tachycardia and increased blood pressure

● Hyperthermia

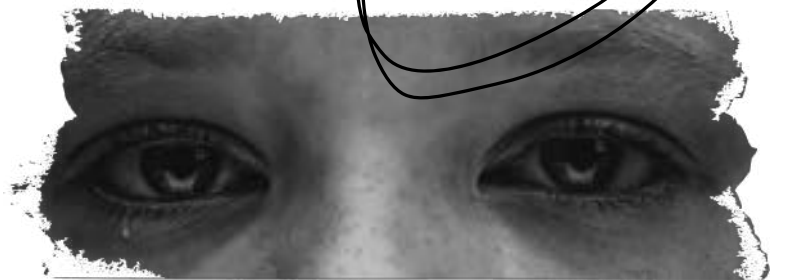
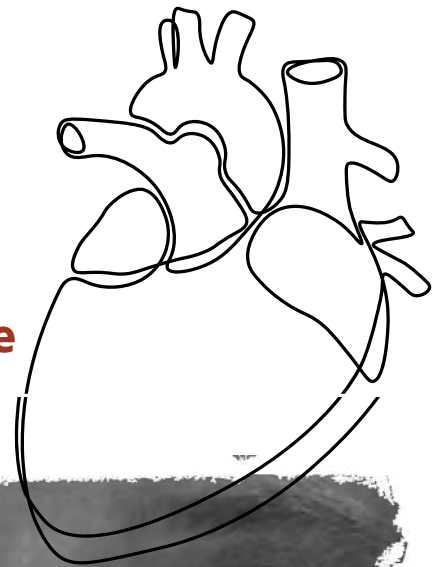
which causes heat cramps

● Loss of appetite

● Stress and anxiety

● Drowsiness

Stimulants cause anxiety attacks, stomach cramps, and paranoia, which pushes people to hurt others and themselves.



● Hallucinogens

Hallucinogens affect the sensation and perception of reality. Abusers of this drug may hallucinate and see, hear, taste, smell, or feel things that do not exist, which would affect their thoughts and feelings in an unusual way.

Hallucinogens cause:

- Tachycardia
- Aggressiveness
- Memory loss
- Anxiety and panic attacks
- May lead to (paranoia)

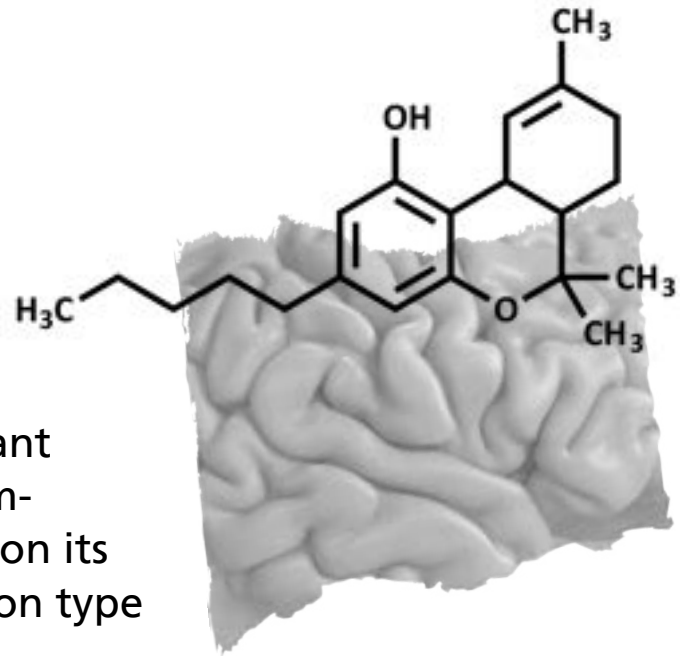


All types of drugs are dangerous!

Drugs transmit the wrong messages to the body. In advanced cases, drug abusers may become unable to breath, have a heart attack, go into a coma, or even die. This may happen at any time and with the use of any type of drugs.

Weed (Hashish)

Extracted from the Indian cannabis plant that contains around 500 chemical compounds that have serious implications on its users, Hashish may be the most common type of drug due to its low price.



Weed distorts

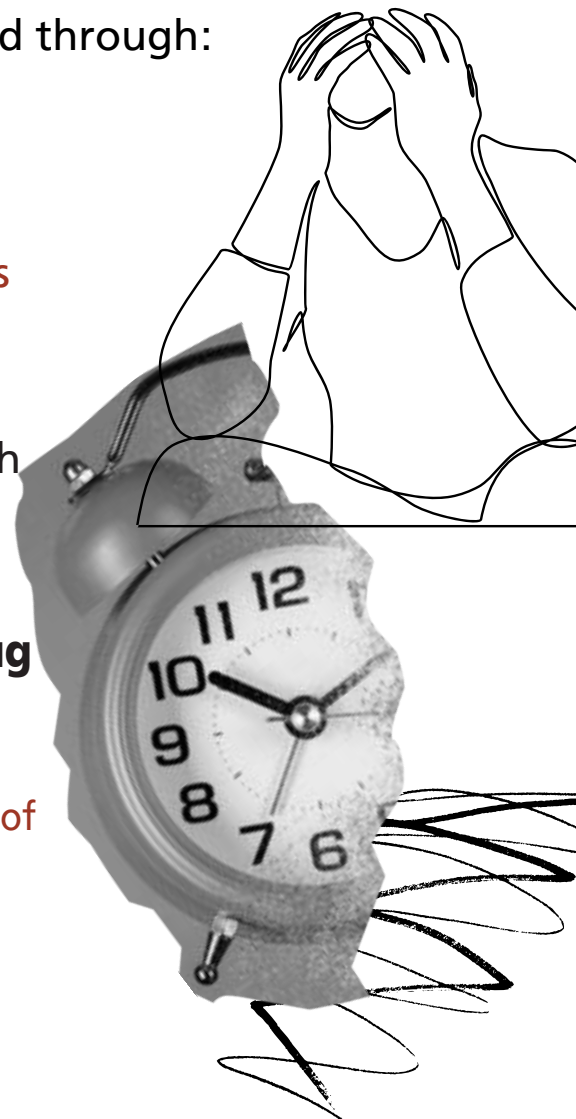
• During the first hours and days

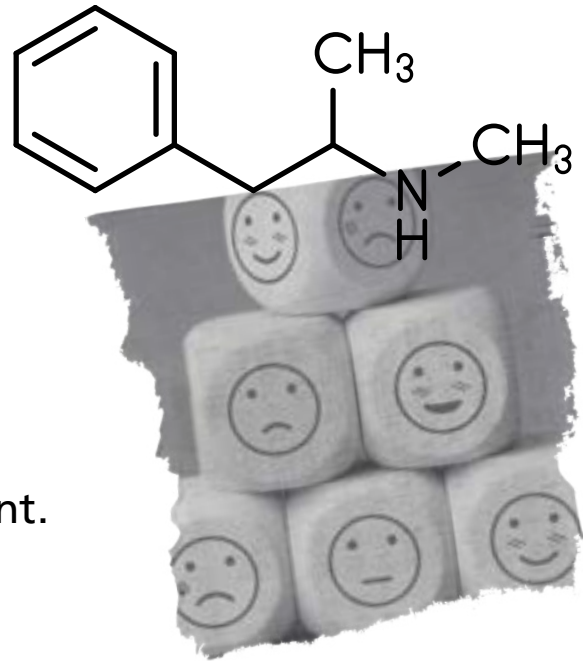
The effect of hashish kicks in after the first minutes of being inhaled. It moves from the lungs to the bloodstream where it travels to the rest of the organs and brain. Its effects are manifested through:

- Increased appetite
- Failure to recognize time and place
- Weakening of motor skills and slow reactions
- Cognitive impairment
- Short-term memory impairment
- Anxiety and fear, lack of trust and panic (with some users or with overdose cases)

• After weeks and months of using the drug

- Memory impairment
- Weakening of learning skills and IQ
- Increased risk of respiratory diseases and destruction of the lungs
- Increased risk of mental illnesses, such as anxiety and depression
- Increased risk of heart disease and strokes





Crystal myth (Shabu)

The chemical name of Shabu is amphetamine. Shabu is the common term used among those who use this type of drug, which is a central nervous system stimulant.

Crystal myth distorts

• During the first hours and days

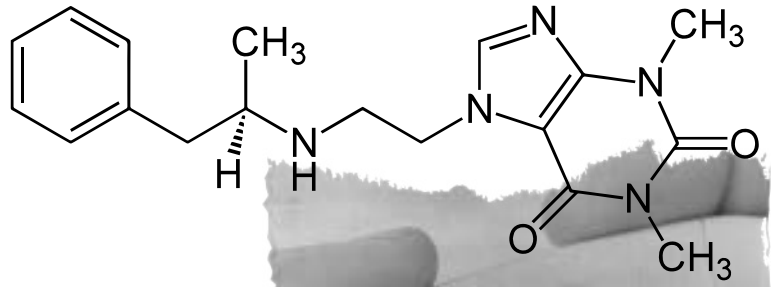
Shabu is a highly addictive substance and its usage is significantly linked to many health, physical and psychological issues, including:

- Dryness of the mouth
- Severe dental problems
- Insomnia, fear and anxiety attacks
- Tachycardia and increased blood pressure
- Excessive sweating
- Hallucinations and aggressive behavior

• After weeks and months of using the drug

- Osteoporosis
- Permanent heart and brain diseases
- Hyperthermia when the body fails to naturally regulate its temperature
- Damage to the blood vessels in the brain, leading to a brain stroke
- Death





Captagon

A highly addictive chemical substance known as fenethylline, which is a central nervous system stimulant.

Captagon distorts

• During the first hours and days

- Lethargy (lack of energy)
- Violence and aggressiveness
- Difficulty sleeping (insomnia)
- Tachycardia and increased blood pressure
- Malnutrition
- Constant headaches



You may know the type of drug you are using, but you do not know if it's a **lethal dose**

• After weeks and months of using the drug

- Acute depression
- Brain hemorrhage
- Cardiovascular toxicity
- Death



Misuse of prescription medications

What are prescription medications?

They are drugs prescribed by a physician for certain health conditions to be taken in accurate doses. These drugs require a prescription that is only effective for the treatment of the described cases.

Prescription medications are safe to use under medical supervision. However, they may be misused for other purposes:

- Using the prescription of someone else
- Administering the medication in a different way or taking a dosage different than the one indicated on the prescription

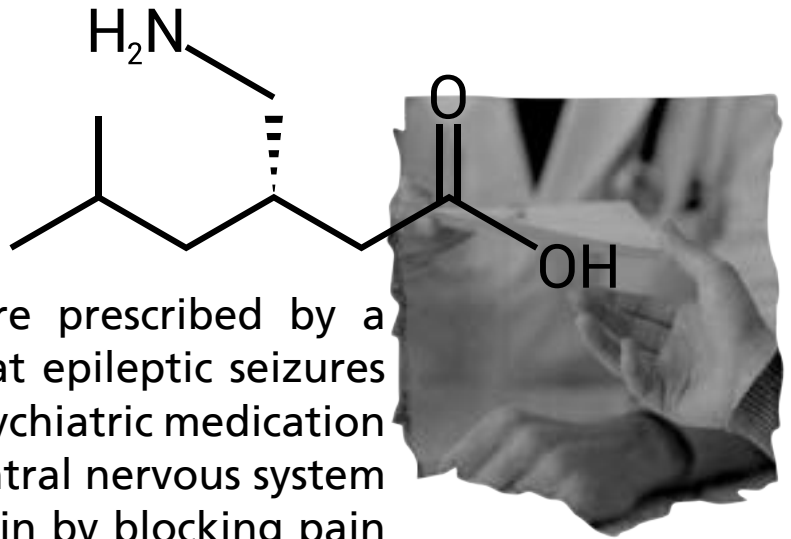
For other purposes, such as for mood-lifting or relaxation!

Most popular misused prescription medications

- Lyrica
- Xanax
- Tramadol

Lyrica

One of the medications that are prescribed by a neurologist. It is intended to treat epileptic seizures and soothe the pain. It is a non-psychiatric medication and directly interacts with the central nervous system receptors, which minimize the pain by blocking pain signals transmitted from the nerves to the brain and the body.



Studies have indicated that cases of misusing Lyrica have recently increased among young people and adolescents who are dangerously taking the medication to lift their mood, without realizing the problems associated with its usage, including addiction.

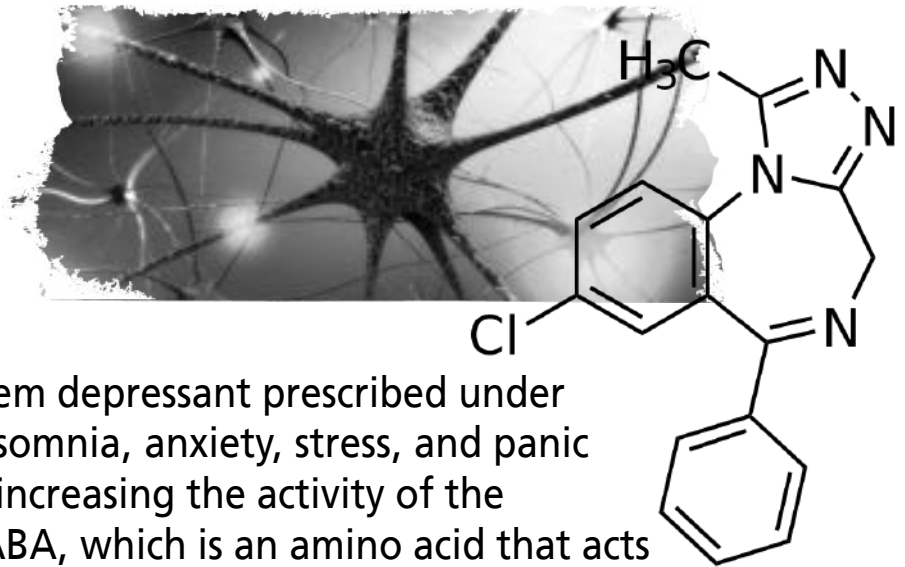
What happens to the body when Lyrica is misused?

• Effects during the first days of misuse

- Lack of focus
- Nausea, constipation, and dizziness
- Vision changes
- Feelings of sadness and depression
- Dangerous changes in blood pressure
- Outbursts and inability to control mood swings
- Feeling agitated
- Apnea
- Dryness of the mouth
- Suicidal thoughts

• Weeks and months after usage

- Pancreatitis
- Intense suicidal thoughts
- **Physical dependence and addiction:** the patient experiences withdrawal symptoms when trying to quit the drug, which is accompanied by a strong desire and urge to take the medication.



Xanax

Xanax is a central nervous system depressant prescribed under medical supervision to treat insomnia, anxiety, stress, and panic attacks. It affects the brain by increasing the activity of the neurotransmitter known as GABA, which is an amino acid that acts as a neurotransmitter in the central nervous system. Increased GABA levels slow down the brain's activity, which has a positive effect for those suffering from insomnia and sleeping problems.

Nevertheless, increased levels of this amino acid's activity may be harmful.

What happens to the body when Xanax is misused?

• Effects during the first days of misuse

One of the most important effects of misuse is a very slow brain activity, which leads to:

- Lack of focus
- Memory issues and impairment
- Decreased blood pressure
- Hallucinations: imagining or hearing things or sounds that are not real
- Confusion and inability to talk clearly
- Dryness of the mouth
- Vision changes
- Extreme headache and dizziness

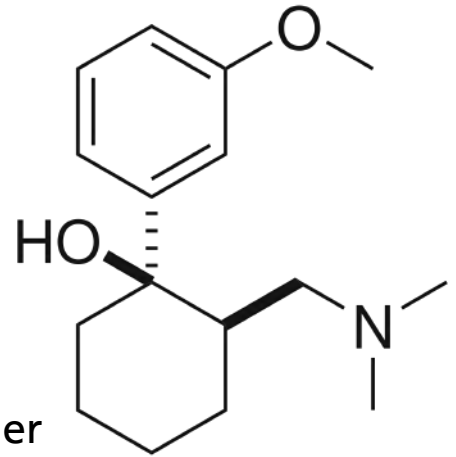
• Weeks and months after usage

- Misusing Xanax causes physical dependence and addiction: the patient experiences withdrawal symptoms when trying to quit the drug, accompanied by a strong desire and urge to take the medication.



Tramadol

Tramadol is an opioid drug prescribed under medical supervision. It directly interacts with opioid receptors in the central nervous system. These receptors are located in several parts of the brain and body and minimize the pain by blocking pain signals transmitted from the nerves to the brain and the body.



What happens to the body when Tramadol is misused?

• Effects during the first days of misuse

One of the most important effects of misuse is a very slow brain activity, which leads to:

- Lack of focus
- Nausea and constipation
- Weak heartbeats
- Confusion
- Apnea
- Decreased blood pressure

• Weeks and months after usage

- Misusing Tramadol causes physical dependence and addiction: the patient will experience withdrawal symptoms when trying to quit the drug, accompanied by a strong desire and urge to take the medication.

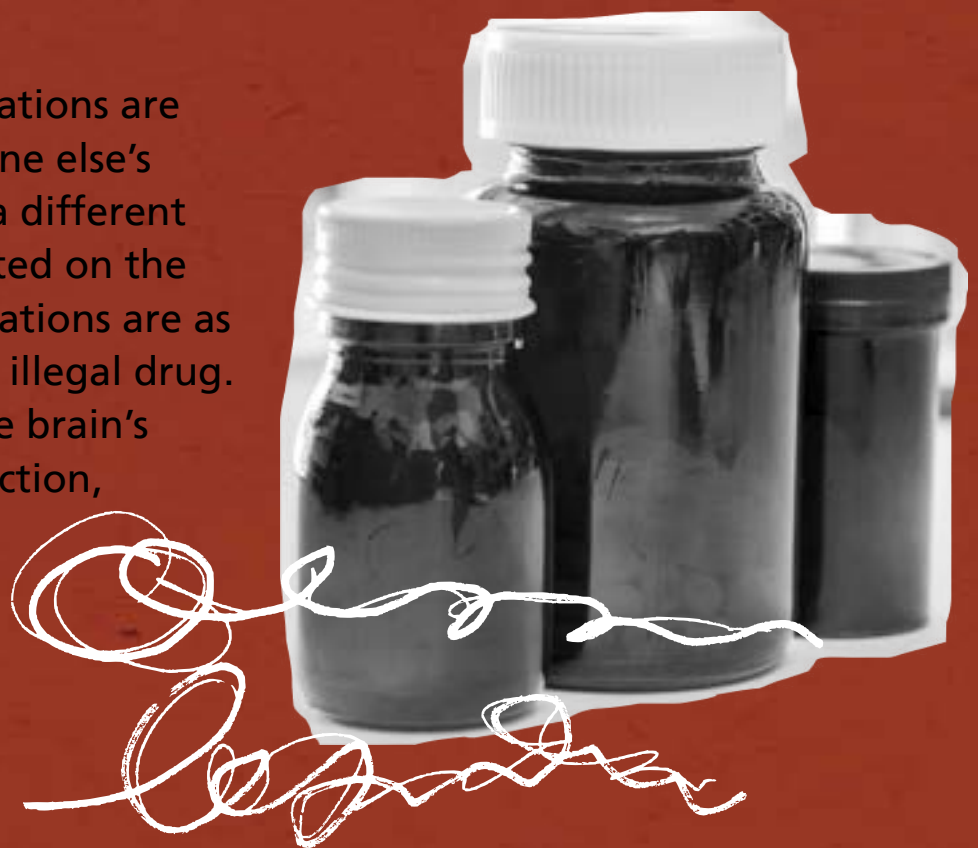


Taking an overdose of these medications without a prescription or using someone else's medication will force the body to become dependent and addicted to the drug. The body will be incapable of functioning naturally without these substances because the brain and the body will become accustomed to these compounds. Consequently, the patient will find it difficult to stop these medications or may need increased doses to obtain the same initial effective results, which leads to addiction.

Is medication addiction less harmful than drug addiction?

No.

When prescription medications are misused by taking someone else's medication or by taking a different dose than the one indicated on the prescription, these medications are as dangerous as any type of illegal drug. They negatively affect the brain's neurons and lead to addiction, overdose, and death.





Can someone become an addict if they use drugs from time to time?



“One time won’t hurt!”

Most drug addicts started with this notion. They had only planned to try drugs as a one-time experience or had initially decided to take them on certain occasions. However, drugs directly harm the nervous, respiratory, and circulatory systems from the first use. They alter the body and have dangerous repercussions.

Therefore, addiction may happen at any time!

Contrary to common misconception, it cannot be controlled.



Drugs rapidly control one's life.



Common misconceptions about drugs

Misconceptions	Correction
Having fun is linked to using drugs	Drug abusers isolate themselves from social activities and friends. They are constantly looking for ways to obtain the substance. They believe that they can only enjoy themselves when they are under the influence.
People believe that taking drugs may help them control their anxiety	Drugs are not a solution for anxiety. On the contrary, they worsen the condition. There are healthy ways to fight anxiety without resorting to drugs.
Taking drugs from time to time does not lead to addiction	Taking drugs may be optional at first and reserved for certain occasions. Afterwards, a strong urge kicks in to try them more than once a week. Then, things go out of hand and that urge becomes a necessity.
Weed is not classified as a drug and is not addictive	Hashish contains many toxins and irritants that affect brain receptors, causing senses to become more heightened. For example, colors become brighter, it is more difficult to think and make any decisions and hallucinations kick in. Hashish symptoms are very dangerous and may lead to schizophrenia.



You are exposed to becoming an addict at any time

• Drug tolerance:

A state that the addict experiences after taking the drug repeatedly. With each time, they have to increase the dose to reach the same effect.

Tolerance and dependence are often associated with one another **and may be hard to differentiate.**

• Dependence:

This occurs when the addict begins taking higher doses. The body is now dependent on the drug, which leads to powerful urges and withdrawal symptoms. The addict takes more drugs to alleviate these symptoms and soon reaches a state where they **believe that they cannot lead a normal life** unless they are under the influence.

• Addiction:

A medical condition that involves an urgent and consistent desire to take drugs. It is known to be an apparent out of control compulsive behavior.



Always remember!

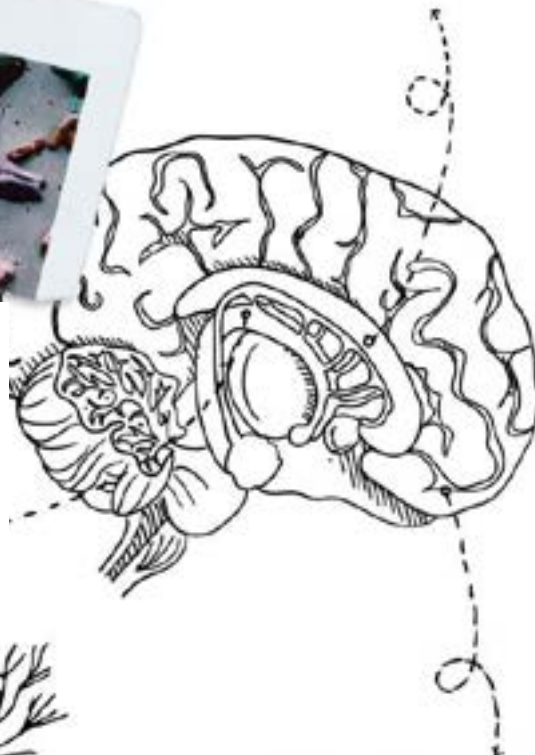
Entering the first stage will undoubtedly lead to the next ... Do not let experimenting with drugs deprive you from the joys of life.



Something that distorts your mind

Cerebral cortex

It is responsible for forming thoughts and solving problems. Damaging this part affects your thinking, your balance in life, and your ability to make decisions.



Basal ganglia

It is responsible for feeling pleasure. When taking drugs, you are risking your life and are no longer capable of enjoying the things that once made you happy.



Amygdala

It is responsible for reducing stress and anxiety. If damaged, you become severely anxious and angry.

Taking some drugs over long periods of time leads to a 50% loss of dopamine-producing cells and let's not forget that dopamine is known as the happy hormone.

Psychological and mental health

All drugs affect psychological and mental health. They alter the mood and behavior, and may lead to permanent and severe mental health problems.



Social and financial effects

- Family disintegration
- Friends become distant and friendships are lost due to aggressive behaviors
- Neglect of studies and job loss
- Loss of social status
- Reckless and subconscious money spending
- Money loss and increased debt to obtain the drug





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