



Substance Abuse Fact Sheet

ALCOHOL

Also known as:

Booze, Sause, Brews, Brewski, Hooch, Juice

Facts about Alcohol:

1. One 12 ounce beer = 5 ounce glass of wine = 1 - 2 shots of 80 proof liquor.
2. How alcohol affects you depends on: how much alcohol is consumed; the time period in which it is consumed; how much food is in the stomach, and body weight. Alcohol is a depressant.
3. When someone has a problem, they follow certain patterns: lie to sober friends and family; hide it from sober friends and family; party more with drinking friends; and deny they have a problem
4. The best thing to do for a friend with a problem is to tell a counselor or someone who can help.
5. Alcohol poisoning occurs when alcohol is consumed too fast, which can lead to coma or even death.
6. The worst thing to do when a person has had too much to drink is to leave them alone or lying down. They need to be kept awake and moving-- and they need medical help.
7. Alcohol-related accidents are the #1 killer of teens. 1.4 million teens a year are injured in some way through an alcohol related accident.
8. A BAL (Blood Alcohol Level) of .1 means you have 12 times more likelihood of being in an accident. A BAL of .2 means you have 60 times more likelihood of being in an accident.
9. Binge drinking can lead to permanent brain damage; coma, then death, can happen in less than an hour. Some of the social effects of alcohol are: unprotected sex, pregnancy, STD's, date rape.
10. Only time can sober a person. It takes approximately 1 hour for each drink to be metabolized in the body.

INHALANTS

Also known as:

Laughing Gas, Snappers, Poppers, Whippets, Bold, Rush, etc.

Facts about Inhalants:

1. Inhalants are invisible, volatile substances found in common household products that produce chemical vapors that are inhaled to induce psychoactive or mind altering effects.
2. Common household products such as glue, lighter fluid, cleaning fluids, and paint all produce chemical vapors that can be inhaled and abused.
3. Inhalants are breathed in through the nose or the mouth in a variety of ways, such as: "sniffing" or "snorting"; "bagging" — sniffing or inhaling fumes from substances sprayed or deposited inside a plastic or paper bag.
4. About 1 in 5 kids report having used inhalants by the eighth grade. Inhalants are also one of the few substances abused more by younger children
5. Inhalant abuse can cause damage to the parts of the brain that control thinking, moving, seeing, and hearing.
6. Inhaled chemicals are rapidly absorbed through the lungs into the bloodstream and quickly distributed to the brain and other organs.
7. Nearly all inhalants produce effects similar to anesthetics, which slow down the body's function.

- The user can experience slight stimulation, feeling of less inhibition or loss of consciousness.
8. Additional symptoms exhibited by long-term inhalant abusers include: weight loss, muscle weakness, disorientation, inattentive-ness, lack of coordination, irritability, depression, and damage to the nervous system and other organs.
 9. Prolonged sniffing of the highly concentrated chemicals in solvents or aerosol sprays can induce irregular and rapid heart rhythms and lead to heart failure and death within minutes.
 10. Common household products misused as inhalants are legally available for their intended and legitimate uses. These include glue, lighter fluid, cleaning fluids, and paint all produce chemical vapors that can be inhaled.

MARIJUANA

Also known as:

pot, herb, grass, weed, Mary Jane, and reefer, Aunt Mary, skunk, boom, gangster, kif, ganja., etc.

Facts about Marijuana:

1. Marijuana has been around for a long while. Its source, the hemp plant (*cannabis sativa*), was being cultivated for psychoactive properties more than 2,000 years ago. Although cannabis contains at least 400 different chemicals, its main mind-altering ingredient is THC (delta-9-tetrahydrocannabinol).
2. The amount of THC in marijuana determines the drug's strength, and THC levels are affected by a great many factors, including plant type, weather, soil, and time of harvest. Sophisticated cannabis cultivation of today produces high levels of THC and marijuana that is far more potent than pot of the past. THC content of marijuana, which averaged less than 1 percent in 1974, rose to an average 4 percent by 1994.
3. Marijuana and other cannabis products are usually smoked, sometimes in a pipe or water pipe, but most often in loosely rolled cigarettes known as "joints." Some users will slice open and hollow out cigars, replacing the tobacco with marijuana, to make what are called "blunts." Joints and blunts may be laced with other substances, including crack cocaine and the potent hallucinogen phencyclidine (PCP), substantially altering effects of the drug.
4. A mild hallucinogen, marijuana has some of alcohol's depressant and disinhibiting properties. User reaction, however, is heavily influenced by expectations and past experience, and many first-time users feel nothing at all.
5. Effects of smoking marijuana include dry mouth and throat, increased heart rate, impaired coordination and balance, delayed reaction time, and diminished short-term memory. Moderate doses tend to induce a sense of well-being and a dreamy state of relaxation that encourages fantasies, renders some users highly suggestible, and distorts perception (making it dangerous to operate machinery, drive a car or boat, or ride a bicycle). Stronger doses prompt more intense and often disturbing reactions including paranoia and hallucinations.
6. Most of marijuana's short-term effects wear off within two or three hours. The drug itself, however, tends to linger on. THC is a fat-soluble substance and will accumulate in fatty tissues in the liver, lungs, testes, and other organs. Two days after smoking marijuana, one-quarter of the THC content may still be retained. It will show up in urine tests three days after use, and traces may be picked up by sensitive blood tests two to four weeks later.
7. Marijuana use reduces learning ability. A 1995 study of college students discovered that the inability of heavy marijuana users to focus, sustain attention, and organize data persists for as long as 24 hours after their last use of the drug. Earlier research, comparing cognitive abilities of adult marijuana users with non-using adults, found that users fall short on memory as well as math and verbal skills.
8. Chronic marijuana smokers are prey to chest colds, bronchitis, emphysema, and bronchial asthma. Persistent use will damage lungs and airways and raise the risk of cancer. There is just as much exposure to cancer-causing chemicals from smoking one marijuana joint as smoking five tobacco cigarettes. And there is evidence that marijuana may limit the ability of the immune system to fight infection and disease.

9. Marijuana also affects hormones and regular use can delay the onset of puberty in young men and reduce sperm production. For women, regular use may disrupt normal monthly menstrual cycles and inhibit ovulation. When pregnant women use marijuana, they run the risk of having smaller babies with lower birth weights, who are more likely than other babies to develop health problems. Some studies have also found indications of developmental delays in children exposed to marijuana before birth.
10. Although dangers exist for marijuana users of all ages, risk is greatest for the young. For them, the impact of marijuana on learning is critical, and pot often proves pivotal in the failure to master vital interpersonal coping skills or make appropriate life-style choices. Thus, marijuana can inhibit maturity.

Source: <http://ww.acde.org>

METHAMPHETAMINE

Also known as:

crank, crystal, crystal glass, christina, tina, ice, speed, trash, garbage, ice cream, dunk, junk, no doze, etc.

Facts about Methamphetamine:

1. Methamphetamine is a central nervous system stimulant drug that is similar in structure to amphetamine. Although methamphetamine can be prescribed by a doctor, its medical uses are limited, and the doses that are prescribed are much lower than those typically abused.
2. Most of the methamphetamine abused in the United States comes from foreign or domestic superlabs, although it can also be made in small, illegal laboratories, where its production endangers the people in the labs, neighbors, and the environment.
3. Methamphetamine increases the release and blocks the reuptake of the brain chemical (or neurotransmitter) dopamine, leading to high levels of the chemical in the brain—a common mechanism of action for most drugs of abuse. Dopamine is involved in reward, motivation, the experience of pleasure, and motor function. Methamphetamine's ability to release dopamine rapidly in reward regions of the brain produces the intense euphoria, or "rush," that many users feel after snorting, smoking, or injecting the drug.
4. Chronic methamphetamine abuse significantly changes how the brain functions. Studies have shown alterations in the activity of the dopamine system that are associated with reduced motor skills and impaired verbal learning.
5. Repeated methamphetamine abuse can also lead to addiction—a chronic, relapsing disease characterized by compulsive drug seeking and use, which is accompanied by chemical and molecular changes in the brain. Some of these changes persist long after methamphetamine abuse is stopped. Reversal of some of the changes, however, may be observed after sustained periods of abstinence (e.g., more than 1 year).
6. Taking even small amounts of methamphetamine can result in many of the same physical effects as those of other stimulants, such as cocaine or amphetamines, including increased wakefulness, increased physical activity, decreased appetite, increased respiration, rapid heart rate, irregular heartbeat, increased blood pressure, and hyperthermia.
7. Long-term methamphetamine abuse has many negative health consequences, including extreme weight loss, severe dental problems ("meth mouth"), anxiety, confusion, insomnia, mood disturbances, and violent behavior.
8. Chronic methamphetamine abusers can also display a number of psychotic features, including paranoia, visual and auditory hallucinations, and delusions (for example, the sensation of insects crawling under the skin).
9. Transmission of HIV and hepatitis B and C can be consequences of methamphetamine abuse. The intoxicating effects of methamphetamine, regardless of how it is taken, can also alter judgment and inhibition and can lead people to engage in unsafe behaviors, including risky sexual behavior.

10. Methamphetamine use among teens appears to have dropped significantly in recent years, according to data revealed by the 2009 Monitoring the Future survey. The number of high-school seniors reporting past-year use is now only at 1.2 percent, which is the lowest since questions about methamphetamine were added to the survey in 1999; at that time, it was reported at 4.7 percent. Lifetime use among 8th-graders was reported at 1.6 percent in 2009, down significantly from 2.3 percent in 2008. In addition, the proportion of 10th-graders reporting that crystal methamphetamine was easy to obtain has dropped to 14 percent, down from 19.5 percent 5 years ago.

Source: <http://drugabuse.gov>

TOBACCO

Also known as:

smokes, butt, square, cigs, ciggies, stogs, stogies, stokes, snouts, bogeys, boges, gorts, ciggy wiggy dilly's, darts, refries, straights (for factory rolled ones), hairy rags, hausersticks, jacks, joes, etc.

Facts about Tobacco:

1. Each day in the United States, approximately 4,000 adolescents aged 12-17 try their first cigarette. Each year cigarette smoking accounts for approximately 1 of every 5 deaths, or about 438,000 people. Cigarette smoking results in 5.5 million years of potential life lost in the United States annually.
2. Forty-six percent of high school students have ever tried cigarette smoking, even one or two puffs. Eleven percent of high school students have smoked a whole cigarette before age 13.
3. Cigarette smoking by young people leads to immediate and serious health problems including respiratory and nonrespiratory effects, addiction to nicotine, and the associated risk of other drug use.
4. Smoking at an early age increases the risk of lung cancer. For most smoking-related cancers, the risk rises as the individual continues to smoke.
5. The younger people begin smoking cigarettes, the more likely they are to become strongly addicted to nicotine. Young people who try to quit suffer the same nicotine withdrawal symptoms as adults who try to quit. Several studies have found nicotine to be addictive in ways similar to heroin, cocaine, and alcohol. Of all addictive behaviors, cigarette smoking is the one most likely to become established during adolescence.⁴
6. All states have laws making it illegal to sell cigarettes to anyone under the age of 18, yet 14% of students under the age of 18 who currently smoke cigarettes reported they usually obtained their own cigarettes by buying them in a store or gas station during the 30 days before the survey.
7. Children and teenagers constitute the majority of all new smokers, and the industry's advertising and promotion campaigns often have special appeal to these young people.
8. An estimated 10-11 million youth aged 12-18 live in a household with at least one smoker, and over 6 million are exposed to secondhand smoke daily.
9. Those most affected by secondhand smoke are children. Because their bodies are still developing, exposure to the poisons in secondhand smoke puts children in danger of severe respiratory diseases and may hinder the growth of their lungs. Secondhand smoke exposure during childhood and adolescence may contribute to new cases of asthma or worsen existing asthma.
10. There is no risk-free level of secondhand smoke exposure. Even brief exposure can be dangerous.

Source: <http://www.cdc.gov>

