

[cocaine]

Benzoylmethyl Ecogine

Slang/Street names for COCAINE:

COKE, 'C', SNOW, STARDUST, FLAKE, BLOW, NUMBIES, GUMMERS, COCO PUFFS, WHITE LADY, TOOT, NOSE CANDY

COCAINE aka 'Coke' is one of the oldest drugs known to man.

It has been abused for over a hundred years in its powder form and thousands of years in its most primitive form of cocoa leaves. The pure form of cocaine was first extracted in the early 1900's from the Erythroxylon cocoa bush which grows mainly in Peru and Bolivia which are second only to Colombia in current production.(1)

There are essentially two forms of cocaine: Cocaine hydrochloride salt and the 'freebase'. The salt is the powdered form which can be dissolved in water and either snorted/sniffed or injected into the vein. The freebase form is a smokable variety of the drug that has not been neutralized by acid.

Whilst cocaine is an illegal drug it still has some medical uses and therefore can be administered by a doctor. Cocaine is addictive and is a central nervous system stimulant that also suppresses the appetite.

Cocaine like most drugs effects the reward centers of the brain. It is a powerful central nervous system stimulant and causes increased levels of Dopamine to flood the neural synapse. It also stops the natural recycling of this neurotransmitter thereby causing an excessive buildup which then gives the user an euphoric effect.

The so called rewards however come at a heavy price ranging from addiction to psychological effects and a whole host of debilitating physical effects not to mention the social and relational damage that it brings.



An overlooked effect of many drugs is the **damage that is done to the fabric of the addict's relationships**; brought on by the betrayal of trust the abuse and neglect that the family face as a fall out of one's addiction.

UNUSUAL FACTS :

Ingesting cocaine can cause severe bowel gangrene because of reduced blood flow. (2)

"Cocaine was soon sold over-the-counter. Until 1916, one could buy it at Harrods: a kit labelled "A Welcome Present for Friends at the Front" contained cocaine, morphine, syringes and spare needles." (3)

'Forced March' was a cocaine based tablet used by the intrepid explorer Ernest Shackleton in the early 1900's on his unsuccessful Antarctic exploration. At that time the ill effects of the drug were not known. (4)



DIRECTIONS - "One to be dissolved in the mouth every hour when undergoing continued mental strain or physical exertion"



HOW IT MESSES YOU UP... SHORT TERM :

Many who use Cocaine seek after some of the seemingly beneficial short term effects of the drug such as: (5)

Mental alertness, Increased energy, Decreased appetite and Increased arousal. What they don't bargain for is that very quickly the body becomes tolerant and to get the same effect, they need to increase the dosage thereby increasing the damaging effects. **The body never builds up tolerance to the damaging effects of Cocaine.**

These damaging effects can include:

- Increased blood pressure
- Constricted blood vessels
- Dilated pupils
- Increased heart rate
- Increased temperature
- Violent erratic behaviour at higher doses
- Death by overdose

Cocaine affects many parts of the body as seen in the chart below. (6)

SIDE EFFECTS OF CHRONIC USE OF COCAINE

BRAIN:

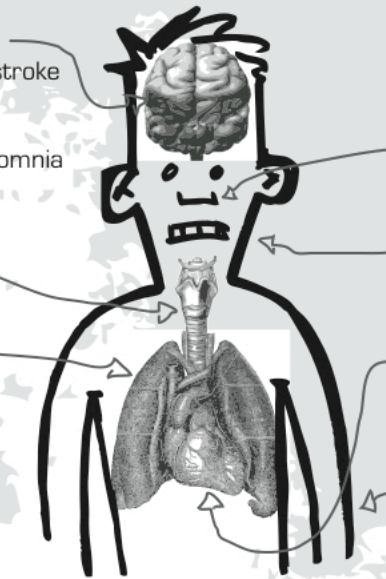
Increased risk of stroke
reduced attention
Insatiable hunger
Insomnia/Hypersomnia
Lethargy

THROAT:

Soreness
Hoarse voice

LUNGS:

Hemoptysis
Bronchospasm
Dyspnea
Infiltrates
Eosinophilia
Chest pain
Asthma



SYSTEMATIC:

Fever
Eosinophilia

NOSE:

Rhinorrhea
(discharge)

TEETH:

Bruxism
(abrasion)

HEART:

Increased risk of infarction
(dying tissue)

SKIN:

Pruritus
(causes desire or reflex to scratch)

HOW IT MESSES YOU UP... LONG TERM :

Long term Cocaine use can bring on a plethora of unwanted effects such as: (7)




- insomnia
- depression
- anxiety, paranoia and psychosis
- eating disorders and weight loss
- sexual dysfunction
- hypertension and irregular heart beat
- sensitivity to light and sound
- hallucinations—some people may even experience sensations of insects crawling under the skin
- cerebral atrophy (wasting of the brain), lesions (8) and impaired thinking.
- Collapsed veins, abscesses and damage to heart, liver and brain.
- Substantial vein damage can cause gangrene (9)

(photo depicts gangrenous toe, not due to injecting)



HOW IT'S INTRODUCED INTO THE BODY :

(The skull indicates the most used methods of ingestion of the drug described in this Fact Sheet)

- Injected/Intravenously 
- Injected/Intramuscularly
- Sniffed/Snorted (powder) 
- Inhaled (vapour)
- Smoked 
- Swallowed
- Eaten
- Absorbed through skin



myths

Cocaine isn't addictive – FALSE!

It may not be physically addictive but it is extremely psychologically addictive and creates powerful cravings leading to compulsive patterns of use. (11)

There is no hangover with cocaine – FALSE!

As with all drugs the 'dumping' of feelgood chemicals that cocaine causes leaves the user having a 'low'. In fact it can be so severe that suicidal thoughts are not uncommon. (12)

Cocaine use improves sexual desire and performance – FALSE!

Whilst it increases the sexual desire and performance in the short term the long term results are often the opposite – such as decreased sexual function, inability to achieve and maintain an erection, men developing breasts and possible impotence. (13)



OTHER DATA THAT'S RELEVANT :

- There is currently no pharmacotherapy to treat Cocaine unlike Methadone for Heroin. There is only psychotherapy and counselling that is currently available to treat Cocaine addiction. (14)
- Coca-cola contained cocaine from 1885 until 1906 when the damages of cocaine became better understood. (15)
- The chances of having a heart attack increase 24 times when on cocaine! (16)
- The most common two drug mixture that causes death is Alcohol & Cocaine. They combine to cause coca ethylene which puts enormous stress on the heart. (17)
- Squirrels go Nuts! An article in the 'South London Press' tells how squirrels in a Brixton neighbourhood are suspected to have discovered a hidden stash of 'crack cocaine' and were being seen to be displaying addictive/aggressive behaviour. Apparently local users were hiding their illegal stashes in the front gardens of unsuspecting homeowners. (18)
- When Albert Niemann first synthesized pure cocaine in 1860 it was hailed by all as the final cure to all of humanity's illnesses and maladies! It wasn't long after that the dark truth of the drug's real effects became known... (19)



As with most drugs on the market today cocaine is also branded. Here is a heist with a street value of millions of dollars branded with a 'scorpion' brand.





FIRST AID :

A Cocaine overdose is a medical emergency and some will die without medical intervention. If you suspect someone has overdosed, check to see if they are breathing, put them on their side and gently tilt their head back to open their wind-pipe.

Call an ambulance immediately (dial 000) and follow the operator's instructions.

The patient should be made as comfortable as possible, preferably by a qualified medical or first aid person, until paramedics arrive. (10)

BEST AID :

never touch it



WHERE TO GET HELP : medical and other

- DirectLine Alcohol and Drug Counselling and Referral Line
1800 888 236
- Centre Against Sexual Assault (CASA)
House 9347 3066
- Live Free Victoria 03 58523777



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