

Drugs Most Commonly Used by Youth and Children

(Sources include U.S. Department of Health and Human Services – SAMSHA: National Institute on Drug Abuse, Partnership for a Drug-Free America)

The road to preventing drug addiction requires that we educate ourselves about the drugs, how to identify them, signs of use, and the effects. The table below contains the most common illicit drugs used by youth and children.

DRUG	STREET NAMES	DESCRIPTION/ SIGNS OF USE	EFFECTS/ DANGERS	STATISTICS/ RESEARCH
Alcohol	Juice, cold ones, brewskies, poison, booze, hooch, sauce (and many others)	Odor on breath, change in behavior or moods, nausea, vomiting, headaches, lack of concentration	Addiction. Death, permanent brain damage and numerous physical and mental health problems, inadequate contraception, physical violence, unsafe vehicle use, suicide, depression	81% of youth drink alcohol. 12.6 million people over the age of 12 are heavy drinkers. 25% of 8 th graders have been drunk at least once.
Marijuana	Pot, herb, grass, weed, Mary Jane, Aunt Mary, skunk, boom, gangster, kif, ganja, Texas tea, Maui wowie, chronic (and 200 others)	Contains over 400 chemicals Green, brown or gray dried, shredded, leaves, stems, seeds, and flowers. Mostly smoked. Odor on clothes or room, use of incense and other deodorizers, use of eye drops, change in sleep habits, signs of drug paraphernalia, hostility, fatigue, withdrawal.	Addictive. Depression, dizziness, red, bloodshot eyes; memory problems, silly and giggly for no reason, high incidence of auto accidents, learning problems, respiratory problems, immune system impairments, frequent chest colds, possible cancer. Same result as tobacco.	Most commonly used illicit drug. 76% of illicit drug users. 47% of high school grads have used marijuana. Swedish researchers found long-term use can increase risk of mental illness, such as schizophrenia. Studies show high school students rarely use other drugs without trying marijuana. 104% greater use of cocaine in marijuana users.
Cocaine/ Crack	Coke, C, snow, flake, powder, sugar, nose candy, rock, base or blow	Cocaine is fine, white powder snorted, sniffed, injected. Crack is a smokable derivative. Irritability, mood disturbances, paranoia, auditory hallucinations	Highly addictive. Disturbances in heart rhythm, heart attacks, chest pain, respiratory failure, strokes, seizures, headache, abdominal pain, nausea	In 1999, 9.8% of high school seniors and 4.8% of 8 th graders used it at least one.
Hallucinogens	LSD: acid, blotter, boomers, cubes, microdot, yellow sunshine Mescaline: buttons, cactus, mesc, peyote Psylocybin: Magic mushroom, purple passion, shrooms, PCP	Snorted, smoked, pills, powder, syrups. Can produce unpredictable, erratic, and violent behavior, sometimes leading to serious injuries and death, shallow breathing	Increased heart rate and blood pressure, decreased awareness of touch and pain that can result in self-inflicted injuries, convulsions, coma, heart and lung failure. Mental health effects include: Depression, anxiety, paranoia, violent, behavior, flashbacks	Several drugs, some “club drugs” in this category. Increasing use among teens.

DRUG	STREET NAMES	DESCRIPTION/ SIGNS OF USE	EFFECTS/ DANGERS	STATISTICS/ RESEARCH
Heroin	Lady, white girl, horse, black tar, brown sugar, smack, good, H, junk	White or brownish powder or black, sticky substance. Flu-like symptoms, watery eyes, runny nose, loss of appetite	Addictive. Increased risk of HIV/AIDS, hepatitis B & C, collapsed veins, bacterial infections, abscesses, infection of heart lining and valves, arthritis, overdose and death	Needle-less heroin use shows significant increase by 12 th grade; however, first decline in 8 th grade use since doubling between '93 and '99
Inhalants	Paint thinners, gasoline, glues, butane, propane, aerosol propellants, nitrous oxide, laughing gas, poppers, snappers, whippets, glue, whipped cream, rush	Chemical odors on breath or clothing; paint or stains on body, hidden empty spray or solvent cans; drunk or disorderly appearance, slurred speech, nausea, loss of appetite, inattentiveness, lack of coordination, irritability or depression, sudden death	Depression, sudden death for novice and habitual users. Damage to brain, lungs, nerves, liver, kidney and bones	Most popular among younger teens than older teens. Used by 9% of 8 th graders, 7% of 10 th graders, and 6% of 12 graders
Methamphetamine	Meth, ice (crystallized form), batu, glass, crystals, crystal-meth, speed, chalk	Snorted, injected, smoked, or taken orally. Heart palpitations, blurred vision, violence, hallucinations, aggression	Powerfully addictive. Damage to brain, lungs, liver, memory loss, aggressions, psychotic behavior, heart and brain damage, increased risk of sexual behavior	4.9 million. Or 2.3% of populations over 12 have tried it at least once
Ecstasy or MDMA	Called ecstasy, club drug, Adam XTC, hug, beans, love drug	Feelings of exhilaration, energy, increased mental alertness, reduced appetite, weight loss, mild hallucinations	Use can lead to death for first time and habitual users. Increased heart rate, blood pressure and metabolism; dehydration, heart failure; impaired memory and learning	In 2000, increased use in grades 8, 10 and 12 (grades studies). More prevalent use in teens than cocaine, availability increased sharply
Ritalin	Schedule II prescribed drug. Also know as R-ball, Skippy, smart drug, vitamin R	Injections, tablets or crushed and snorted. Sometimes injected with heroin, cocaine or both. Loss of appetite, weight loss, digestive problems	High potential for abuse. Increase or decrease in blood pressure, psychotic episodes, digestive problems	Ritalin abuse is on the rise. Prescribed Ritalin and similar stimulants are sometimes stolen and sold as a street drug
Steroids	Anabolic steroids, related to male sex hormones. Promote growth of skeletal muscles. Roids, sauce, slop	Taken orally or by injection. Wild mood swings, aggression, violence	Infertility, breast development, shrinking, testicle, short stature, tendon rupture, heart attacks, enlarged heart ventricle, cancer, acne, cysts. Psychiatric effects such as homicidal, rage, mania, and delusions	Use among younger male teens increased sharply in 1999 and 2000, held steady in 8 th and 12 th grades (grades studied)
Prescription Drugs	Most abused: Pain killers, tranquilizers, sedatives, stimulants	Orally or injected	Addictive. Serious physical and mental health complications. Death or overdose.	Prescription drug addiction is on the rise. Use among 16 and 17 years olds increased from 3.4% to 4.3 % from '99 to '00

