

Other risks

- Dancing, or other physical activity, can cause dehydration, high blood pressure and an increase in body temperature and may result in muscle breakdown and heart and kidney failure that can occur quickly.
- Ecstasy can interfere with blood clotting, cause easy bruising and/or bleeding from the mouth, nose, and intestines. In severe cases, a person may bleed to death.
- Ecstasy is not legal, so pills sold as ecstasy may contain other very harmful drugs (LSD, heroin, speed)
- A “bad trip” may occur – the person may become anxious, have convulsions (violent muscle spasms), and may not know what is real (psychotic).
- Some people have flashbacks (feeling the effects of the drug days or weeks later).
- Some people may be allergic causing reactions similar to an overdose (high temperature, blood clotting, liver problems)
- If combined with some antidepressant drugs, a dangerously or deadly increase in heart rate and blood

- People can put themselves in risky situations when on this drug (driving while impaired, having unprotected sex, taking unsafe actions which could result in injury)
- Regular use may cause long-term or lasting damage to learning and

Is Ecstasy Addictive?

Ecstasy is not physically addictive. However, the drug can often take on great importance in people’s lives and some people become rather compulsive to their use. Taken too frequently, MDMA loses its effect on most users, but many users will continue to use it.

REMEMBER:

A person’s experience with any drug can vary. Here are a few of the many things that may effect the experience: the amount and strength of the drug taken, the setting, a person’s mood and expectations before taking the drug, gender, overall health, past experience with that drug and whether more than one drug is being used at the same time. Using alcohol and drugs at the same time can be dangerous.



Ecstasy



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Ecstasy

MDMA or ecstasy is a synthetic mind-altering drug with amphetamine-like and hallucinogenic properties. Its chemical structure is similar to two other synthetic drugs, MDA and methamphetamine, which are known to cause brain damage.

Street names

Ecstasy is referred to by many different names. Some of these names are:

- XTC
- Adam
- Clarity
- Lover's Speed
- Hug
- Beans
- Love Drug

How is it consumed?

Ecstasy is often available in tablet form and is usually ingested orally. It is also available as a powder and is sometimes snorted and occasionally smoked, but rarely injected. Its effects last approximately four to six hours.

Users of the drug say that it produces profoundly positive feelings, empathy for others, elimination of anxiety and extreme relaxation. Ecstasy is also said to suppress the need to eat, drink, or sleep, enabling users to endure two-to-three day parties.

Consequently, ecstasy use sometimes results in severe dehydration or exhaustion.

Short-term effects

Many of the risks users face with MDMA use are similar to those found with the use of amphetamines and cocaine use. They are:

- Confusion
- Depression
- Sleep problems
- Drug cravings
- Severe anxiety and paranoia
- Muscle tension
- Involuntary teeth clenching
- Nausea
- Blurred vision
- Rapid eye movement
- Faintness
- Chills or sweating
- Increase in heart rate and blood pressure

MDMA use is also linked to long-term damage to those parts of the brain critical to thought and memory. People who are taking MDMA may be risking permanent brain damage.

Also, there is evidence that people who develop a rash that looks like acne after using MDMA may be risking severe side effects, including liver damage, if they continue that drug.

Long-term effects

Long-term use of ecstasy may cause the brain to slow or permanently stop its production of serotonin. Without this natural brain chemical, the person can no longer control moods, sleep, pain, emotion and appetite. The result is long-term depression and anxiety.

Also, forgetfulness, poor concentration, tiredness, sleeping problems, a risk of liver damage if the person is a frequent user, damage to teeth and jaw because of teeth clenching, aggressive behavior, death from kidney or heart failure caused by lack of water in the body (dehydration) or an abnormally high body temperature.

Facts about ecstasy

- Researchers at the John Hopkins University demonstrated that four days of exposure to the drug causes damage that persists six to seven years later.
- When ecstasy is taken by mouth, the effects manifest about 30-45 minutes later.
- Memory tests of people who have taken ecstasy are compared to non-drug users have shown that ecstasy users have lower scores.
- According to the 2003 Monitoring the Future survey, 4.5% of 12th graders, 3.0% of 10th graders, and 2.1% of 8th graders have used ecstasy in the past year.