

HEROIN USE:



What is Heroin?

- Heroin is an opioid drug made from morphine
- Heroin can be a white or brown powder, or a black sticky substance "black tar heroin"

How do people use Heroin?

- It is injected, sniffed, snorted or smoked.
- It is sometimes mixed with crack cocaine, a practice known as "speedballing".

What are the effects of Heroin?

- It is injected, sniffed, snorted or smoked.
- Heroin binds to opioid receptors in the brain, especially those involved in feelings of: pain, pleasure, controlling heart rate, sleeping and breathing.

Short-term effects

- Euphoria
- Dry mouth
- Warm flushing of skin
- Heavy feeling in arms and legs
- Nausea and vomiting
- Severe itching
- Clouded mental functioning
- Back and forth between a state of consciousness and semi-consciousness



Long-term effects

- Insomnia
- Collapsed veins for people who inject the drug
- Damaged tissue in nose for those who snort
- Infection of the heart lining and valves
- Abscesses
- Constipation and stomach cramping
- Liver and kidney disease

Is heroin
addictive? YES



Long-term effects continued...

- Lung complications including pneumonia.
- Mental disorders such as: depression and antisocial personality disorder.
- Irregular menstrual cycles for women.
- Sexual dysfunction for men.

Heroin addictive?

- Frequent users develop a tolerance, which means they need higher and/or more frequent doses of the drug to get desired effects.
- Addicts who stop abruptly experience withdrawal symptoms:
- Severe cravings, sleep problems, diarrhea and vomiting, severe muscle and bone pain, cold flashes

Can a person overdose on heroin?

- A heroin overdose occurs when a person uses enough of the drug to produce a life-threatening reaction or death.
- It can result in the slowing of breathing or stopping it altogether.
- Resulting in *hypoxia* when less oxygen reaches the brain.

Other effects

- Heroin contains additives such as sugar, starch or powdered milk.
- This can clog blood vessels leading to the lung, liver, kidney or brain leading to permanent damage.
- Also sharing needles can increase the risk of contracting...HIV