

Marijuana is the most widely used illegal substance in the world today. And, while marijuana is recognized to have some beneficial medical uses and legalization efforts are underway, it is an addictive drug. Marijuana addiction has clear signs and indicators, with the most obvious being an uncontrollable urge to possess and use the drug. Behavioral changes, impaired cognitive functioning and denial about the addiction are some of the most common indicators.

Not surprisingly, marijuana intoxication can cause distorted perceptions, impaired coordination, difficulty in thinking and problem solving, and problems with learning and memory. Research has shown that marijuana's adverse impact on learning and memory can last for days or weeks after the acute effects of the drug wear off. As a result, someone who smokes marijuana every day may be functioning at a suboptimal intellectual level all of the time.

HEROIN ADDICTION

Heroin is an opiate that is experiencing increased usage due to the popularity of club drugs such as Ecstasy and the availability of smokeable and snortable forms of the drug. Its increased accessibility, the ease of usage and social acceptance of club drugs have resulted in a new generation of heroin addicts.

As an opiate, heroin produces a feeling of euphoria - the "high." As use of the drug continues, the body builds tolerance and requires higher and more frequent doses to induce the high. Short-term, heroin suppresses the central nervous system, resulting in "cloudy" mental function and depressed respiration, which can lead to respiratory failure. Long term effects include liver and kidney failure and infections from unsanitary manufacturing or needle usage.

Cocaine addiction

Cocaine is a highly addictive stimulant that has earned the reputation of being one of the most highly addictive drugs available. It provides a fast high - often within a couple of minutes after use - and a relatively fast "comedown" - often within two-three hours. As a result, users are more likely to take the drug multiple times within one session, accelerating the path to addiction. Cocaine addicts experience severe behavioral changes, often exhibiting erratic behavior depending on whether they are in the initial rush or the comedown. Over time, they are unable to hold down their jobs or honor their family obligations due to their behavior and increasing dependency on the drug. The habit is expensive and can bankrupt the addict.

CLUB DRUGS

What Are Club Drugs?

The term "club drugs" has been used in the past to refer to drugs primarily used by young adults at dance clubs and raves. Club drugs are still rampant in these settings, but are also appearing in other social settings within our communities, such as in bars, on college campuses, and at high school parties or gatherings. Club drugs often appear at events for young adults that are advertised as "non-alcoholic functions" in which parents assume the attendees will be supervised and safe. Club drugs include, but are not limited to, MDMA (Ecstasy), LSD, methamphetamine, GHB, ketamine, and Rohypnol. Other drugs such as marijuana and alcohol are also popular at clubs or raves. Poly-drug use is also prominent: the effects of combining different substances often are unpredictable and dangerous.

What Is A Rave?

Raves are all night dance parties that originated in Europe in the mid 1980s. After gaining popularity among teens and young adults in the 1990's, organizers of raves (or 'free parties' as they are labeled by some promoters today) continue to put them on and they have become more sophisticated. Raves are attended mostly by teens, some who

dress in baggy clothes and costumes and wear colorful candy or plastic necklaces as was common when the rave culture began. Today, most rave-goers dress casually and raves attract a wide audience. Raves are usually held, frequently on short notice, in locations such as empty warehouses, fields, and dance clubs. Raves, attended in small or massive numbers, typically begin at dusk and end at dawn.

AMPHETAMINE/METHAMPHETAMINE

Amphetamine, dextroamphetamine and methamphetamine, are collectively referred to as amphetamines. Their chemical properties and actions are so similar that even experienced users have difficulty knowing which drug they have taken.

Amphetamine was first marketed in the 1930s as Benzedrine in an over-the-counter inhaler to treat nasal congestion. By 1937 amphetamine was available by prescription in tablet form and was used in the treatment of the sleeping disorder narcolepsy and the behavioral syndrome called minimal brain dysfunction (MBD), which today is called Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD).

During World War II, amphetamine was widely used to keep the fighting men going; both dextroamphetamine (Dexedrine) and methamphetamine (Methedrine) became readily available. As use of amphetamines spread, so did their abuse. Amphetamines became a cure-all for helping truckers to complete their long routes without falling asleep, for weight control, for helping athletes to perform better and train longer, and for treating mild depression. Intravenous amphetamine abuse spread among a subculture known as "speed freaks." With experience, it became evident that the dangers of abuse of these drugs outweighed most of their therapeutic uses.

Today, amphetamine is used as an aid in treating narcolepsy, some forms of depression, and Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD). Yet, due to its potential for abuse or addiction, other treatment methods are used more frequently.

BRAND NAME AMPHETAMINES: Adderall, Desoxyn, Desoxyn Gradumet, Dexedrine, Dexedrine Spansule and DestroStat.

SIGNS OF AMPHETAMINE OVERDOSE: Symptoms include restlessness, tremors, rapid breathing, confusion, hallucinations, panic, aggressiveness, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, an irregular heartbeat, and seizures.

WITHDRAWAL EFFECTS: depression, stomach cramps, nausea or vomiting, "the shakes," tiredness

PCP, ECSTASY AND OTHER HALLUCINOGENS

Hallucinogens and dissociative drugs are both categories of drugs that alter a person's state of mind and mood. Hallucinogens can cause a person to hallucinate — that is to see, hear, or feel things that aren't actually real. Hallucinogens include LSD, Mescaline (Peyote), Psilocybin, and Psilocyn (Mushrooms). Dissociative drugs, such as Ketamine or PCP, alter a person's state of mind and mood but do not cause a person to hallucinate. Dissociative drugs cause a person to detach, or dissociate, from his or her surroundings.

PRESCRIPTION DRUGS

Prescription drug abuse is growing among all ages. People who are prescribed powerful drugs to treat medical or psychiatric conditions can become addicted or dependent on the drug due to long-term or incorrect use. Teenagers and young adults are using the drugs for the stimulant, euphoric or sedating effects. They often find the drugs at home or find them readily available from peers or doctors willing to prescribe unnecessary medications. The most commonly abused prescription drug categories are:

NARCOTICS (OxyContin, Vicodin, Percocet), also known as analgesics or opioids, are drugs that are prescribed for moderate to severe physical pain. They are abused because of their euphoric, sedating, and numbing effects.

Narcotic abuse causes tolerance and dependence and the withdrawal symptoms are severe.

DEPRESSANTS (Xanax, Valium, Librium) are drugs that are prescribed to treat anxiety and sleep disorders. They are abused because of their sedating properties. With abuse, depressants cause tolerance and dependence and the withdrawal symptoms can be severe.

STIMULANTS (Ritalin, Dexedrine, Meridia) are prescribed to treat ADD/ADHD and other conditions such as asthma. They are abused because of their energizing and euphoric effects. Stimulants do not generally cause tolerance or dependence but abuse is associated with hostility and paranoia. There is also great risk for cardiovascular failure and seizures.

IntoAction Recovery recognizes the seriousness of the prescription drug crisis. The perception that these substances are more legitimate and therefore safer is deceptive, as their abuse can have deadly consequences. We work with each patient to develop an individual **prescription drug abuse treatment** program designed to address the specific causes of the addiction as well as treating the underlying drug dependency. Our staff is available 24/7 to answer your questions and to begin the admissions process to start you on your recovery. IntoAction Recovery is located in Houston, Texas and takes admissions from all around the country.

Call today to speak to our admissions staff to see how we can help you or a loved one overcome their prescription drug addiction.