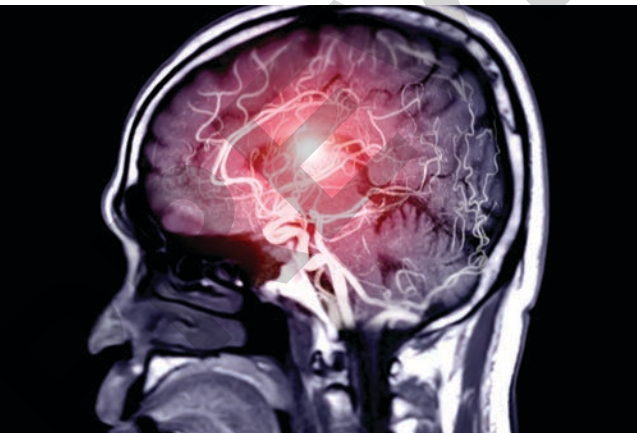


WHAT IS METHAMPHETAMINE?

Methamphetamine, most commonly just called meth for short, is a lab-made drug often found in powder form or as a clear rock or crystal. It's sometimes pressed into pill form to resemble other drugs in order to make it more appealing to unknowing users. Meth is a stimulant that acts on the brain and body to create an intense rush of energy.



While meth is most often mass produced in “superlabs” by illegal drug manufacturers, it can also be made cheaply and easily in small batches using common chemicals like pseudoephedrine (a drug found in cold medication). Because it is inexpensive to produce and highly addictive, drug dealers can make high profits from selling meth, leading to a staggering increase in use around the country.



In order to maximize profits, these drug manufacturers have begun mixing in other powerful drugs like Fentanyl into the meth they sell, creating an extremely deadly combination that can kill with just one use. Despite this danger, 2.5 million people reported using meth in the past 12 months.

YOUR BRAIN ON METH

Meth has a profound impact on brain functions by increasing the amount of dopamine. This natural chemical is involved in body movement, as well as the motivation and reinforcement of rewards. Because meth rapidly releases high levels of dopamine in the brain, the reward centers are stimulated. The brain associates reward with the drug, making the user want to repeat the experience. As the user continues to abuse meth, the brain and body become dependent on these higher dopamine levels to function, leading to addiction.

RESOURCES

National Institute on Drug Abuse:

<https://www.drugabuse.gov/drug-topics/methamphetamine>

U.S. Drug Enforcement Agency:

<https://www.dea.gov/factsheets/methamphetamine>

METHAMPHETAMINE

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in the know

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SHORT-TERM EFFECTS

Taking even small amounts of meth can result in many of the same health effects as those of other stimulants, such as cocaine or amphetamines. These include:

- Increased energy
- Heightened physical activity
- Decreased appetite
- Loss of sleep
- Faster breathing
- Rapid and/or irregular heartbeat
- Increased blood pressure and body temperature



LONG-TERM EFFECTS

One of the most well-known effects of meth use is "meth-mouth," a condition where the user's teeth and gums rapidly deteriorate, making it difficult to eat. Additionally, users who inject meth are at increased risk of contracting HIV/AIDS through sharing needles.

Long-term meth use has many other negative consequences, including:

- "Meth Mouth" (a state of severe tooth decay and gum disease)
- Anxiety, paranoia and insomnia
- Psychotic behavior and violence
- Auditory hallucinations and delusions
- Homicidal or suicidal thoughts
- Elevated blood pressure
- Strokes
- Heart infections
- Kidney and liver damage
- Lead poisoning
- Brain damage (similar to Alzheimer's Disease)
- Premature delivery and/or birth defects
- Death



WITHDRAWAL

While the symptoms of meth withdrawal may differ from person to person, in general users experience these common symptoms:

- Extreme meth cravings
- Anxiety
- Fatigue and sleepiness
- Depression
- Psychosis
- Increased appetite, particularly for carbohydrates



OVERDOSE AND DEATH

Meth users are constantly in danger of overdose and death, particularly if they take meth that is mixed with other drugs (like Fentanyl). Symptoms of a meth overdose include:

- Trouble breathing
- Signs of a heart attack or stroke, such as chest pain or confusion
- Seizures
- High or low blood pressure
- A high body temperature
- Kidney failure (indicated by infrequent urination or dark urine)
- Intense stomach pain

- Changes in personality or alertness
- Loss of consciousness
- Intensely hyper or aggressive behavior
- Paranoia



DON'T MESS WITH METH

Overdose deaths from meth have gotten higher over the past few years, with approximately 53,495 people dying in the past 2 years. It's clear that this deadly drug should be avoided at all costs. Keep your health a top priority by just not messing with meth.

