

Facts about Methamphetamine

Methamphetamine is an extremely dangerous drug. Meth can be called many different names, including: speed, crystal, crystal meth, crank, tweak, go-fast, ice, glass, uppers, and black beauties. Meth comes in different forms, and can be smoked, snorted, or injected. Meth acts by changing how the brain works and speeding up many functions in the body, such as heart rate and blood pressure. Methamphetamine can cause lots of harmful things, including inability to sleep, paranoia, aggressiveness, and hallucinations. Some people who use methamphetamine get addicted the first time they use it.

Know the facts about methamphetamine use:

Methamphetamine affects your brain. In the short term, meth causes mind and mood changes such as anxiety, euphoria, and depression. It can also cause people to become paranoid, confused, and aggressive. Long-term effects can include chronic fatigue, paranoid or delusional thinking, hallucinations, and permanent brain damage.

Methamphetamine affects your body and your health. Using meth creates a false or fake sense of energy, which can push the body faster and further than it's meant to go. It increases the heart rate, blood pressure, and risk of stroke.

After the effects of meth wear off, it can cause a severe "crash" or depression.

Meth users who inject the drug and share needles are at risk for acquiring HIV/AIDS.

Methamphetamine affects your self-control. Meth is a powerfully addictive drug that can cause aggression and violent or psychotic behavior.

Methamphetamine can kill you. People who use meth can die from overheating and convulsions, and also suffer from brain damage and addiction.

An overdose of meth can result in heart failure. Long-term physical effects such as liver, kidney, and lung damage may also kill you.

Meth can be made from lethal and poisonous ingredients like battery acid, drain cleaner, lantern fuel, and antifreeze. Therefore, using meth can also cause a heart attack, stroke, or serious brain damage.

Methamphetamine is illegal. Using, making, and selling meth are illegal in all states. Because meth is such a dangerous drug, the penalties for sale or possession of meth are much harsher than penalties for the same amount of other drugs. For example, possession of a substance containing any amount of methamphetamine carries a prison term of up to 15 years or a fine of up to \$100,000 or both. Selling even the smallest

amount of methamphetamine can result in a prison term up to 20 years, a fine of up to \$250,000, or both.

How can you tell if a friend or family member is using meth? It may not be easy to tell. But there are signs you can look for. Symptoms of methamphetamine use may include:

- Inability to sleep
- Increased sensitivity to noise
- Nervous physical activity, like scratching
- Irritability, dizziness, or confusion
- Extreme anorexia
- Tremors or even convulsions
- Increased heart rate, blood pressure, and risk of stroke
- Presence of inhaling paraphernalia, such as razor blades, mirrors, and straws
- Presence of injecting paraphernalia, such as syringes, heated spoons, or surgical tubing

What can you do to help a friend or family member who is using meth? If you help them, you might even save a life. Encourage your friend to stop or seek professional help. For information and referrals, call SAMHSA's Health Information Network at 1-877-SAMHSA-7 (1-877-726-4727).

Sources: <http://store.samhsa.gov/shin/content//PHD861/PHD861.pdf>;
<http://www.house.leg.state.mn.us/hrd/pubs/methlaws.pdf>