



Cocaine Facts

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Description:

Highly addictive stimulant, illegal/illicit
White powder
Rock Crystal (crack)

Abuse Methods:

Snorting
Injection*
Smoking*

*more immediate and intense high, with shorter duration than snorting

Affects on the Brain: Cocaine acts by preventing dopamine (a brain chemical used by neurons to communicate in response to movement and pleasure) regulation, resulting in a build-up of dopamine that creates euphoria. Long term change in the reward system of the brain, and other brain systems lead to addiction after repetitive use. Increasing doses to overcome tolerance developed from repetitive use increases the abuser's risk of harmful physiological and psychological effects.

Possible Negative Health Affects: Increased heart rate and body temperature, malnourishment from decreased appetite. The majority of cocaine related deaths are from cardiac arrest, seizure, and respiratory arrest.

Additional Dangers: When consumed with alcohol, the liver produces a third substance called cocaethylene. This substance exaggerates the euphoria of cocaine and leaves the abuser more susceptible to sudden death than when cocaine is used singularly.