

**READ THIS
AND MAKE UP
YOUR MIND**
FACTS ABOUT DRUGS

DRUGS

WHAT DO YOU KNOW?

How many people try drugs?

Many young people are offered drugs, but the majority decline. Just over 30% of young people in Denmark between the ages of 16 and 20 years have tried smoking cannabis and about 10% have tried one or more of the other illegal substances. Most people who have tried drugs do so only very occasionally.

Where are drugs sold?

You may be offered drugs in many places – for instance, at private parties, when you are on a night out or in the street. But in fact it is more likely that you will be offered drugs by a friend than by a pusher who is not known to you. Regardless of where the drugs come from, they are illegal and if you are caught with drugs in your possession you will be punished in accordance with Danish law. Minor offences will result in fines, while serious offences can give up to 16 years in prison.

How dangerous are drugs?

Drugs always pose a risk. All drugs can give you a really bad experience. You may become physically and mentally unwell – for example, vomit or get panic-related anxiety. In addition, you may be seriously injured in accidents in traffic etc., because your judgement, your reactions and your movements are impaired. Most drugs can also cause you serious poisoning, and many of the drugs can kill you. There is always an acute risk involved in taking drugs – also if you are taking them for the first time.

How is your brain affected?

The brain governs our senses, actions, thoughts, needs and feelings – the conscious as well as the subconscious ones. A special area of the brain contains the reward system, which makes you happy or satisfied when, for example, you have just eaten, drunk or had sex. This is the

system which ensures that you learn to do the things that make you happy. It is this reward system which is affected by drugs and governs addiction.

Are the effects the same for everyone?

You become more easily addicted to drugs while you are young. This is because the brain and the central nervous system only become fully developed at a later age. This also means that when you are young it is easier to become addicted and more difficult to make judgements during your high. Therefore there is a greater risk of meeting with accidents. The effect that drugs have also varies from person to person. It all depends on how your body and your brain react to the drug. At the same time, the euphoric effect will also depend on whether the surroundings are quiet and safe or noisy and restless.

Are 'natural' drugs better?

It is a myth that drugs made primarily from plants, such as hashish and cocaine, are less dangerous than drugs which are 100% chemically synthesised. In fact, drugs which are 'natural' in origin may pose a greater danger than synthesised drugs.

What is actually in drugs?

You can never be certain what you get when talking about illegal drugs. This is shown by tests of seized drugs. The quantity of active substances may vary quite substantially influencing the strength. In addition, you run the risk that the drug is not what you think. Or that it has been added to and "thinned" with unknown and dangerous substances.

How much do you know about drugs?

If you come across drugs, it is good to know something about them in advance. This guide provides you with the answers to many questions. The icons are used to show how different drugs are normally taken and the effect they have. In addition, you can read about aspects such as the risks involved and addictiveness. The drugs are divided into three groups characterised by effect: sedative drugs, stimulants and hallucinogens.

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Icon key



Prevalence



Injected



Aggression



Sniffed



Eaten



Smoked



High



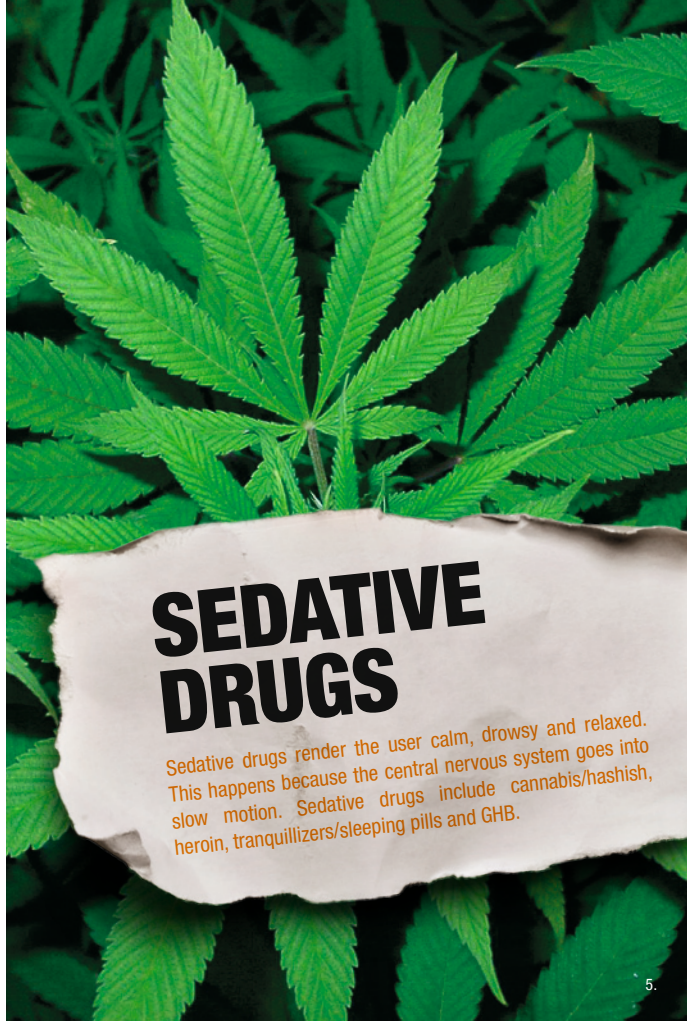
Anxiety



Drunk



Poisoning



SEDATIVE DRUGS

Sedative drugs render the user calm, drowsy and relaxed. This happens because the central nervous system goes into slow motion. Sedative drugs include cannabis/hashish, heroin, tranquillizers/sleeping pills and GHB.

CANNABIS

(hashish, marihuana, pot, skunk)



32%



3-4
hours



Overdose

An overdose of cannabis can produce panic-related anxiety, distorted perception of reality and other psychological symptoms. However, an overdose is not fatal.

Addiction

Cannabis is addictive, and soon a larger dose will be required to achieve the same effect. After 1 month of frequent use, stopping will cause the user to feel unwell. The symptoms of this are insomnia, night sweats, anxiety, irritation, restlessness, concentration problems and bad mood.

Effects and harmful consequences

Use of cannabis over a longer period of time can reduce initiative and concentration. Many addicts 'come to a standstill' in their personal development. Cannabis may also trigger and worsen psychosis and depression.

Mixing drugs

Using cannabis in combination with tranquilizers/sleeping pills, alcohol, heroin or other sedative substances increases the risk of accidents. When cannabis is taken together with hallucinogens, there is a risk of unpredictable behaviour and mentally harmful consequences.

SNIFFING

(of different solvents and aerosol sprays,
e.g. lighter gas)



6%



30-45
min.



112

Overdose

Sniffing of lighter gas, petrol, paint and different types of aerosol sprays may result in an overdose which can lead to death. There is not much difference between the dosage required to induce euphoria and the dosage leading to an overdose, which means that the risk of an overdose is great. It is not for nothing that these everyday products are labelled as "flammable and dangerous to health".

Addiction

Sniffing may lead to addiction. Withdrawal symptoms are headache, stomach pain and muscle cramps.

Effects and harmful consequences

The effect may trigger aggressive behaviour or hallucinations and is followed by a severe hangover. Long-term use causes damage to the brain tissue, impairing memory and learning ability. Kidneys, liver and bone marrow may also suffer damage. Another risk factor is the highly flammable fumes that are emitted, which can result in serious burns.

Mixing drugs

If sniffing is combined with alcohol, tranquilizers/sleeping pills or other drugs, the effect is often completely unpredictable and the risks even greater.

GHB

(gamma-hydroxy-butyrate, 'fantasy')



2-4
hours

112

Overdose

In larger doses GHB is sedative and sleep provoking, and may bring the user in a confused and groggy state. It may also cause sudden loss of consciousness. The risk of a serious or lethal overdose from GHB is great, particularly if it is taken together with alcohol or other sedative drugs, which is a common phenomenon among users. The drug is dangerous because overdosing is easy. There is only a fine line between the dose inducing euphoria and the dose causing an overdose.

Addiction

Use of GHB may lead to addiction.

Effects and harmful consequences

The euphoric state induced is similar to that of alcohol, although the sedative effect is stronger. It is easy to overdose and therefore the risk of overdose is the most serious consequence. The consequences of long-term use are not known at the present time.

Mixing drugs

Users often take GHB together with alcohol, although this combination is known to be even more risky.

TRANQUILLIZERS/ SLEEPING PILLS

(Benzodiazepines, e.g. Stesolid, Valium)



112

Overdose

When used as prescribed by a doctor, tranquilizers/sleeping pills such as Stesolid and Valium are very safe medications, but used as euphoric substances they are dangerous. Benzodiazepine is the active drug which gives the euphoric effect. The drug enhances the effects of alcohol, heroin and other drugs, depressing the central nervous system. An overdose may result in death due to respiratory arrest.

Addiction

The medicine is addictive, meaning that an increase in dosage is needed to achieve the same effect. Withdrawal symptoms are restlessness, anxiety, insomnia and convulsions.

Effects and harmful consequences

The effect is erratic. It is most often sedative, but can also cause hyperactive, chaotic, restless, erratic and aggressive behaviour.

Mixing drugs

Taken together with alcohol or other sedative drugs, there is an increased risk of accidents or violent and aggressive behaviour. Stesolid and Valium are often taken after the use of stimulants such as cocaine and ecstasy, where they are used as a relaxant.

HEROIN ETC.

(morphine and other opioids)



1%



3-4
hours

112

Overdose

Heroin and similar drugs depress the respiratory centre in the brain. An overdose will therefore lead to respiratory arrest and death.

Addiction

The body quickly gets used to heroin. After only a few days' use, an increase in dosage is required to achieve the same effect. Withdrawal symptoms are shivering, sweating, muscle pain, nausea and insomnia, which are similar to influenza symptoms. This is followed by a period of fatigue, irritability, apathy, lack of desire, depression and a strong craving for drugs.

Effects and harmful consequences

If the drug is injected intravenously, there is a great risk of damage to the blood vessels. Addicts who share needles with others run the risk of contracting HIV/AIDS, liver infection, heart valve infection and other serious diseases.

Mixing drugs

Most heroin addicts are polydrug users.

STIMULANTS

Stimulants make the user hyperactive and self-centered. This is because the central nervous system is influenced to work at high pressure. Amphetamine, cocaine and ecstasy are the most common stimulants.



AMPHETAMINE

('speed')



5%



3-4
hours

112

Overdose

Use of amphetamines may lead to an overdose. The symptoms are headache, dizziness, nausea, fever and convulsions.

Addiction

Increasing quantities of amphetamines are required to achieve the same effect. Withdrawal symptoms are anxiety, restlessness, agitation, depression, suspicion, aggression and depression with the risk of becoming suicidal.

Effects and harmful consequences

Amphetamines result in a 'short fuse' and some users become violent. Taken several times at short intervals, result in anxiety and paranoia. Long-term use may cause an amphetamine psychosis requiring psychiatric treatment.

Mixing drugs

Amphetamines enable consumption of large quantities of alcohol. Mixing the two often leads to unpredictable and frequently aggressive behaviour. There is also a risk of mixing amphetamines with hashish, tranquilizers/sleeping pills or e.g. heroin, as these substances relieve the discomfort of the comedown associated with amphetamines.

COCAINE

('coke', 'cola', 'snow', 'CRACK')



4%



15-30
min.

112

Overdose

An overdose of cocaine may have fatal consequences. The danger signals are restlessness, dilated pupils, racing pulse, rapid breathing and increased body temperature. Large doses and repeated use in quick succession increase the risk.

Addiction

Cocaine produces fast ups and downs and is highly addictive. Withdrawal symptoms come in the shape of sleep disturbances, depression, irritability, lack of libido and a strong craving for the substance.

Effects and harmful consequences

Cocaine may trigger outbursts of anger and violent behaviour is not unusual. While cocaine initially stimulates the desire for sex, regular use reduces potency. Cocaine has a great many harmful effects on the brain and heart. Sniffing cocaine also destroys the mucous membranes of the nose. There is a risk of developing serious psychological problems.

Mixing drugs

The downturn is often alleviated with alcohol, cannabis/hash, tranquilizers/sleeping pills or other sedatives. Use of cocaine often leads to polydrug use.

ECSTASY

('MDMA')



3%



4-6
hours



112

Overdose

Overdosing from ecstasy is relatively rare, but may be fatal and there are examples of death occurring after just small doses. The symptoms may be fever, hypertension, seizures, confusion and loss of consciousness.

Addiction

Ecstasy is addictive. With long-term use, larger doses are required to achieve the same effect. Large doses dramatically increase the side-effects.

Effects and harmful consequences

Ecstasy may result in a bad trip with frightening hallucinations, confusion and panic as well as flashbacks months after taking ecstasy. In addition to changes to the central nervous system, ecstasy may damage the heart, kidneys and liver.

Mixing drugs

Alcohol and ecstasy are counteractive and when combined produce unpredictable euphoric effects.

POPPERS

('amyl nitrite etc.')



2-3
min.

112

Overdose

The substance may produce a fall in blood pressure which can cause unconsciousness. When consumed as a drink, poppers may cause a serious overdose with oxygen not being distributed in the blood. This may become life threatening. If the substance has been sniffed, the risk is lower.

Effects and harmful consequences

Poppers are flammable and the liquid severely irritates the skin.

Mixing drugs

It is particularly dangerous to combine poppers and Viagra or hypertension medication, as blood pressure will drop to a critical low.

HALLUCINOGENS

Hallucinogens expose the user to a wholly distorted sensory experience. Something that does not exist will seem completely real and be seen and heard. This is caused by the influence of hallucinogens on the central nervous system, which affects the way in which sensory impressions are experienced. Hallucinogens are found in plants (such as psilocybin mushrooms) and in chemically produced drugs (such as LSD).



PSILOCYBIN MUSHROOMS, LSD

etc.



1%



Mushrooms 6-8 hours
LSD 10-12 hours

Overdose

Overdosing often results in unpleasant psychological reactions: anxiety, confusion and nightmarish experiences, generally termed a "bad trip". But an overdose may also trigger a physical reaction such as hypertension and increased body temperature.

Addiction

Regular use of LSD or mushrooms soon leads to a craving for larger and larger doses to achieve the same effect.

Effects and harmful consequences

LSD, mushrooms and other hallucinogens distort the user's perception of reality, implying risk of anxiety, panic, aggression, accidents such as fatal falls and suicide. There is also a risk of developing a temporary psychosis. In some cases the psychosis may last longer and require medical treatment.

Mixing drugs

Using LSD or mushrooms together with other stimulants increases the risk of completely uncontrolled trips and overdosing.

TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF AND YOUR FRIENDS

How can you help?

Taking drugs can be dangerous. Therefore it is important to take care of yourself and help others who are having problems. If you find that a friend or stranger who has taken drugs becomes depressed, ill or afraid, it is important not to panic. You can help them or call for help.

Drugs may trigger violent reactions. So start by trying to determine the person's behaviour and provide help accordingly:

Panicky and confused

This is seen especially after taking hallucinogens, ecstasy or large quantities of cannabis.

- Calm down the person and tell him/her that you want to help
- Lead the person away from noise and strong light
- Make the person breathe calmly by following your breathing
- Explain quietly and calmly what is happening and what you are doing to help

Overstrung and aggressive

This is seen especially after taking cocaine or amphetamines, but also after consuming alcohol and mixing drugs.

- Calm down the person, speak slowly, be patient, avoid confrontation, discussion and keep a calm dialogue going
- Touch the person as little as possible. Be aware that the person has a low aggression threshold
- Lead the person away from noise and strong light
- Make the person breathe calmly by following your breathing
- Offer the person water
- Explain quietly and calmly what is happening and what you are doing to help

Hyperthermic and hyperactive

This is often seen after taking ecstasy, but also after taking hallucinogens.

- Lead the person away to a cool place and offer him/her water
- Cool down the person by splashing cold water on his/her body
- Let the person stand with his/her forearms in cold water, if possible
- Investigate whether the person has danced intensely for a long time
- Call the emergency services on 112

Absent and anaesthetised

This is seen especially after consuming alcohol and taking other sedatives.

- Keep the person conscious – do not let the person lie down and go to sleep
- Avoid liquid and food as the person risks choking
- Call the emergency services on 112

Unconscious

This is seen especially after consuming alcohol and taking other sedatives, but also after overdosing on cocaine, ecstasy, poppers etc. or mixing drugs.

- Call the emergency services on 112 and give them all the details you can about the situation
- Check the person's breathing and ensure that the airways are not obstructed
- Give mouth-to-mouth resuscitation, if required
- Put the person in the recovery position and loosen any tight clothing
- Keep the person warm with a blanket or similar, but also be aware of overheating

WHO TO CONTACT

If you experience any problems involving drugs during your time at the festival, please contact the first aid workers. If you are at a concert venue, contact any member of the festival staff.

If you would like to know more about the harmful effects of drugs, read more at: www.stofinfo.sst.dk