

ECSTASY

**THE
PARTY IS
OVER**



WHAT IS ECSTASY?

Ecstasy (aka X, E, Adam, Eve, MDMA, party pill, and hug beans) is a synthetic drug often consumed in pill form. It is commonly taken at house parties, raves, or nightclubs and comes in small capsules or tablets with designs and bright colors, packaged to attract users.

Ecstasy can cause increased energy, euphoria, emotional warmth, suppressed appetite, and an inaccurate sense of time and perception. Unfortunately, too many people believe that ecstasy is a safe drug but it can be extremely dangerous.

What is in a typical tablet?

There is no typical ecstasy tablet. Even though pills may have the same stamp and color, it is rare for any two batches of pills to contain the same quality, quantity, and type of chemicals. Ecstasy is made in illegal labs using a wide variety of chemicals. The actual content of this drug depends on the type of ingredients that criminals get their hands on. In other words, you can never be sure what ingredients are in a tablet.



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Why is ecstasy a problem?

By taking ecstasy, you are consuming a drug that tampers with the way your brain and body works. Because you can't be sure what's in a pill, you also cannot safely predict how your body will react to the combination of chemicals. Ecstasy mimics stimulants and hallucinogenic drugs and affects many of the body's systems in ways similar to cocaine or methamphetamine. Ecstasy is known to increase heart rate and blood pressure. In other words, there is no safe dose of ecstasy.

Many drugs are passed off or sold as ecstasy. It is almost always mixed with other dangerous drugs such as ketamine and methamphetamine. More recently, these pills have been mixed with a highly toxic chemical PMMA (para-methoxymethamphetamine) that has caused death with just one use

PMMA is extremely toxic and can be fatal. Between 2010-2012, there were at least 22 deaths in BC and Alberta caused by PMMA in pills sold as 'ecstasy'. The problem with PMMA is that it takes longer to be felt by the user. As a result, some people take more of the drug to get the 'desired' effect but this is also what can lead to an overdose.

What does ecstasy do to the brain?

- Ecstasy will interfere with your brain's normal functioning and natural production of certain chemicals. For example, 'E' causes brain chemicals like serotonin (largely responsible for your mood) to rise while under the use of ecstasy, and then drop to potentially dangerous levels in days following use.
- As well, during use, you may be more vulnerable to unhealthy sexual activity including sexual assault because of decreased inhibitions and artificial feelings of closeness that result from taking ecstasy.
- In days following use, the altered chemical levels in the brain can lead to anxiety, panic attack, confusion, mood swings, depression, and suicidal thoughts that may continue for days.

How might ecstasy affect me while under its influence?

- high energy
- feelings of affection
- sense of well-being
- headache
- brain swelling/seizures
- suppressed appetite
- teeth clenching
- muscle tension
- rapid eye movement
- nausea/vomiting
- chills/sweating
- hallucinations
- blurred vision
- hyperthermia

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- Ecstasy can also cause hyperthermia which is a dangerous rise in body temperature causing seizures, blood clots, and kidney and liver damage.
- People believe that drinking water helps prevent the body from overheating, but it can actually cause serious problems including headaches, vomiting, water intoxication, and in extreme cases, brain swelling leading to possible death.



How might ecstasy affect me after using it?

- Anxiety
- Depression
- Panic attacks
- Confusion
- Mood swings
- Memory Loss
- Sleep problems
- Irritation
- Suicidal thoughts
- Learning problems

Although these 'downs' are often temporary, they can become severe enough to cause serious health problems over time.

Can I trust websites that suggest 'using ecstasy is ok as long as I . . . '?

Many websites claiming to provide tips for the safe use of ecstasy do not have your health and safety in mind and should not be considered as reliable sources. For example, certain websites offering tips for 'safe use' make claims that as long as your ecstasy is 'pure' or 'herbal', harsh side-effects will not occur. In reality, obtaining pure ecstasy is nearly impossible. Even 'dealers' don't usually know what is in the pills they sell.

Some websites offer testing kits to check the purity of drug. However, these kits cannot tell you what other harmful ingredients may be present in the drug tested. Remember that the quality of street ecstasy is known to be very poor so even having a testing kit does not guarantee safety.

- To learn accurate information about Drugs, Mood and Stress, and your Brain visit Mindcheck - a website created especially for youth: <http://www.mindcheck.ca/>.

How do I know if someone has overdosed?

You will know if someone need help immediately if they:

- have trouble breathing or are not breathing at all
- have cold skin
- have blue lips
- are throwing up
- have trouble waking up

If you notice any of these signs, dial 9-1-1 immediately.

- Don't be afraid of getting in trouble.
- Do not leave the person alone.

You could save someone's life!

GOT QUESTIONS?

Where can I go to learn more about drugs such as ecstasy?

- School counselors and teachers can be good sources of information and help
- Talk to parents or other trusted adults in your life
- In Burnaby, you can contact:
 - **Odyssey I**
518 Howard Avenue Burnaby, BC, V5B 3R1
Tel: 604.299.6377
 - **Burnaby Substance Use Services**
#320 – 7155 Kingsway Burnaby, BC, V5E 2V1
Tel: 604.777.6872
 - **Brenda Laface**
District Substance Abuse Prevention Worker
Tel: 604.664.7215
- **If you need help right away or if you are in danger, call 310-1234** (Children's Helpline) or dial 0 from any phone to ask the Operator for the Children's Helpline.

