



Realities of Drug Addiction

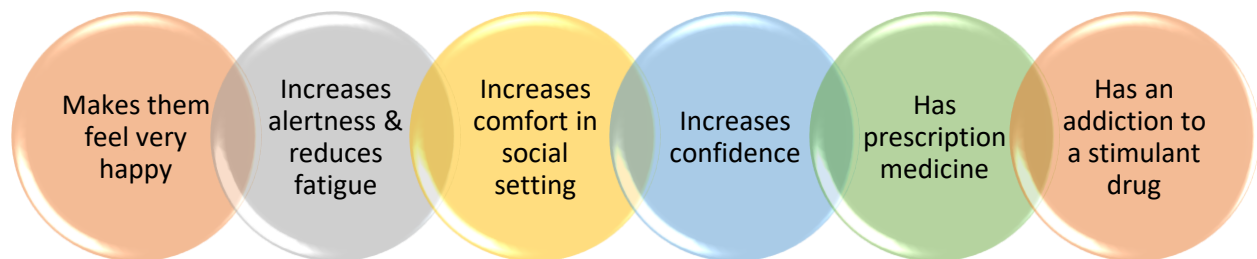
Stimulants: Highly Addictive Drugs

- People who use stimulants typically use a range of drug types such as opioids, cannabis, and alcohol, especially in recreational settings (i.e.: parties).
- Cocaine and amphetamines are two of the most widely used illegal stimulant drugs.
 - People who use stimulant drugs have a higher risk of mortality.

What are Stimulant Drugs:

- Stimulant drugs are a group of drugs that increase activity in the central nervous system.
- Medicines prescribed by a healthcare provider for the treatment of ADHD and obesity are typically amphetamines and are legal if taken as prescribed.
- Stimulant drugs bought from a drug dealer are illegal (cocaine, methamphetamine).

Reasons People Use Stimulants:



There are many serious medical conditions that can occur with stimulant drug use. These conditions involve life sustaining organs, therefore, a person who is using stimulants has a higher risk of death.

- **Heart Attack:** Stimulants increase heart rate, constrict blood vessels, and increase blood pressure. Mixing drugs increase stress on the heart increasing the risk of heart attack and death.
- **Stroke:** Elevated blood pressure increases the risk of stroke.
- **Hyperthermia:** Stimulants increase body temperature.
- **Seizures:** Reduced blood flow and oxygen to the brain can lead to seizures.
- **Psychosis:** Chemical pathways in the brain are disrupted leading to hallucinations, panic, paranoia, delusions, confusion, violent behavior, and feelings of being persecuted.
- **Mental Health:** There is an increased risk of depression and suicide with stimulant use.
- **Infections:** There is a greater risk of HIV, Hepatitis B, sexually transmitted disease, and other blood borne infections.
- **Pregnancy:** There is an increased risk of harm to a fetus.



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Stimulant Drugs:

Amphetamines: These are prescription medicines that are used to treat ADHD, narcolepsy (sleep/wake disturbance), and to suppress appetite.

- Common prescription amphetamines include Adderal, Concerta, Ritalin, and Dexedrine.
- These are legal when a person takes the medicine as directed by their healthcare provider.
- These medicines are often abused. Research studies showed that 45% of young adults who used prescription stimulants **misused** them in 2019.



Cocaine: Highly addictive drug.

- Recreational use of cocaine is illegal.
- Cocaine is a fine, white crystal powder. Drug dealers often mix cocaine with other stimulant drugs and opioids, such as fentanyl. This increases the risk of overdose and death.
- Cocaine is snorted through the nose, rubbed onto the gums, or dissolved into a liquid and injected into a vein.
- Cocaine can be smoked if it is in the form of a rock crystal. The crystal is heated and the vapors are inhaled.
- Some other names include crack, blow, coke, snow, flake.



Methamphetamines: Highly addictive drug.

- It is typically in pill or powder form.
- Crystal meth looks like glass or crystal and is produced in meth labs.
- It is taken as a pill or capsule, snorted through the nose, smoked, or injected into a vein.
- Some other names include Meth, Speed, Ice, Shards, Uppers, Bennies.



MDMA: Also known as Ecstasy and Molly

- Has both stimulant and hallucinogenic effects.
- The drug can be in pill, capsule, powder or liquid form. It is most often swallowed, but can be snorted or smoked.
- Some other names are Disco Biscuit, Clarity, X, Hug Drug.



Khat: Leafy green plant that contains 2 stimulant drugs.

- The leaves can be used fresh or dried.
- Khat can be chewed, used as a tea, made into a paste, sprinkled on food, or smoked.
- Other names include Abyssinian Tea, Chat, Kat, Oat, African Salad



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The Need for Treatment:

Treatment should be a priority because of the serious harm that can occur from stimulant use.

- ◆ **There are no medicines to treat stimulant addiction.**
- ◆ Behavioral and psychotherapy is typically the focus of treatment for stimulant addiction.

Treatment:



- ◆ **Detox:** Medical and nursing assessment and treatment of withdrawal symptoms. Detox typically last a week but may require more time for some individuals.
- ◆ **Inpatient Drug Rehab:** Structured environment with comprehensive services including medical care, nursing services, and psychiatric care. Length of stay is typically 30-90 days.

Behavioral Therapy for Stimulant Use
◆ Motivational Interviewing: A treatment that helps individuals overcome ambivalent feelings and insecurities. It is a counseling style that is direct and person-centered that helps an individual explore their ambivalence and resolve it.
◆ Contingency Management: A behavioral therapy that reinforces an individual's behavior by rewarding them with certain privileges or prizes.
◆ Community Reinforcement Approach: A therapy that helps an individual identify the behaviors that reinforce stimulant use and show how a substance-free life is more rewarding.
◆ Cognitive Behavioral Therapy: A short-term, goal-directed therapy that help an individual understand their challenges, problems, and experiences so they can change their behavior, the way they think about situations, and identify strategies to overcome issues.

Upon discharge from an inpatient rehab program, an individual will need to continue to work on their recovery as an outpatient due to the high risk of relapse.



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