

DRUG ENFORCEMENT ADMINISTRATION



The Truth About Heroin



Heroin is an illegal and highly addictive drug.

What is heroin

- It is an opiate drug processed from morphine, a substance extracted from opium which is derived from certain poppy plants.
- It appears as a white or brownish powder or a black sticky substance known as black tar.

Street Names

Big H, Black Tar, Horse, Smack, Thunder

How is it used?

- It is injected with a needle, smoked or sniffed/snorted.
- Those who inject heroin **risk infectious diseases** such as HIV/AIDS, hepatitis, and liver or kidney disease.

What are the health effects of heroin?

Effects on the mind

- Since it enters the brain so rapidly, heroin is particularly addictive, both psychologically and physically.
- Heroin users report feeling a surge of euphoria or "rush," followed by a twilight state of sleep and wakefulness.

Effects on the body

- Drowsiness, respiratory depression, constricted pupils, nausea, warm flushing of the skin, dry mouth, and heavy extremities.
- Effects of heroin overdose are slow and shallow breathing, blue lips and fingernails, clammy skin, convulsions, coma, and possible death.

True or False?

- Heroin is less dangerous if you snort or smoke it. **FALSE**

FACT: There is **no safe** way of using it. You can still **die from an overdose** or become addicted by snorting or smoking it.

- Stopping heroin use is easy. **FALSE**

FACT: Those who are addicted to heroin and stop using it abruptly may have severe withdrawal symptoms, which can begin as early as a few hours after the drug was last taken. These include restlessness, severe muscle and bone pain, sleep problems, diarrhea and vomiting, cold flashes with goose bumps, and uncontrollable leg movements.

Source: www.drugabuse.gov/publications/drugfacts/heroin

Did you know?

- Research suggests that misuse of prescription opioid pain medicine is a risk factor for starting heroin use.

Source: www.drugabuse.gov/publications/drugfacts/heroin.

- The vast **majority of teens do not use** heroin. In a 2016 national survey, only 0.3 percent of 12th graders used heroin in the past year.

Source: 2017 Monitoring the Future Study, University of Michigan.

- 85 percent of 12th graders perceive a great risk of harm from regular use of heroin.

Source: 2017 Monitoring the Future Study, University of Michigan.

For drug prevention information, visit DEA's websites:



GetSmartAboutDrugs.com

For parents, caregivers, and educators

JustThinkTwice.com

For teens

CampusDrugPrevention.gov

For college students

dea.gov

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