

## ACTIVITY 2C

# IS IT WORTH THE RISK?

## Know Your Drugs

### ALCOHOL

Alcohol is a depressant which is addictive. It can cause dizziness and talkativeness. Drinking large quantities for many years can lead to permanent damage to the brain and liver.

### BATH SALTS

Bath salts refer to an emerging family of drugs containing an amphetamine like stimulant. They are typically found as white or brown crystalline powder. Bath salts can cause paranoia, hallucinations, and psychotic and violent behavior.

They are taken orally, inhaled, or injected.

### COCAINE

Cocaine is a drug made from coca plant leaves. It is a very addictive stimulant that affects the brain. It causes a rise in body temperature, heart rate, and blood pressure. It also causes the inability to sleep or eat.

### CRACK COCAINE

Crack cocaine is made from the powder cocaine. It is processed and broken or cut into “rocks”.

### CRYSTAL METH

Crystal meth is a form of methamphetamine that is often referred to as ice or glass. It is extremely addictive.

### DMT

A synthetic drug producing a hallucinogenic experience that is short-lived but intense. Physical effects include an increased heart rate, seizures, agitation and hypertension. At high doses, cardiac and respiratory arrest have occurred.

### DXM

Dextromethorphan is a cough-suppressing ingredient found in cold medicine. It can cause confusion, dizziness, blurred vision, slurred speech, rapid heartbeat, drowsiness, and disorientation.

### ECSTASY

MDMA or Ecstasy is a synthetic (designer) drug with hallucinogenic properties. It can cause teeth clenching, loss of inhibitions, chills, and/or sweating. It can also increase heart rates and blood pressure. Ecstasy use can interfere with memory. Another form of MDMA called “Molly” is becoming more popular. While Ecstasy is typically laced with meth or caffeine, “Molly” is considered to have a higher level of purity. “Molly,” short for molecule, comes in powder or crystal form.

## **GHB**

This depressant is referred to as “date rape” drug because it can be put into liquid and not detected. It causes sweating, tremors, nausea, confusion, lower heart rate and blood pressure. This can be fatal in high doses.

## **HEROIN**

Heroin is a highly addictive depressant. It affects the brain’s pleasure systems and gets in the way of feeling pain. Users can have slurred speech, droopy eyelids, impaired night vision, vomiting, and constipation. Withdrawal is very painful with many symptoms.

## **INHALANTS**

Inhalants are household products that are sniffed to get high. There are hundreds of household products that can be used as inhalants. (See Glossary, Appendix D) Inhalant users experience symptoms similar to being drunk. Users may have slurred speech, be uncoordinated, dizzy, and confused. They may lose weight and have weak muscles. Abusers can also die.

## **KETAMINE**

A veterinary medicine used as an anesthetic but in humans is a dissociative (feel detached or disconnected) drug. It acts as an anesthetic causing temporary memory loss, loss of motor control, and suppresses pain. It has been used in sexual assaults and can cause convulsions, flashbacks, coma, and even death.

## **LSD**

LSD, also known as “acid,” is odorless, colorless, and usually taken orally. Often it is added to absorbent paper. It is divided into small, decorated squares of one dose each. Physical effects include dilated pupils, increased body temperature, heart rate, and blood pressure. Users may sweat, not eat or sleep, and have tremors. Some users experience severe, terrifying thoughts, and a fear of insanity and death.

## **MARIJUANA**

Marijuana is the most commonly used illegal drug. Marijuana is much stronger than years ago. This makes it more dangerous to use. Use can cause problems with memory, learning, thinking, and problem-solving. Loss of coordination, increased heart rate, anxiety, and panic attacks are also experienced. A regular user may have the same lung problems as tobacco smokers. Tar and carbon monoxide from smoking marijuana is three to five times greater than that found in tobacco. Street names include grass, pot, and weed.

## **MESCALINE**

Mescaline is a hallucinogen taken from the peyote cactus but also produced synthetically. It causes disorientation, increased heart rate, blood pressure, and body temperature, and hallucinations.

## **METHAMPHETAMINE**

Methamphetamine is a highly addictive stimulant that affects the central nervous system. Meth use can cause insomnia, decreased appetite, euphoria, and increased body temperature. It also causes convulsions, anxiety, paranoia, and aggressiveness. Its use can result in death.

## **MUSHROOMS**

Mushrooms are hallucinogens that cause different levels of effects on the user. Mushrooms cause hallucinations, disorientation, confusion, and aggression.

## **OPIOID**

Opioids are a class of drugs that include the illegal drug heroin, synthetic opioids such as fentanyl and pain relievers available by prescription such as oxycodone, hydrocodone codeine, morphine and many others. Opioids can be very addictive. Prescription opioids should only be used under the careful watch of a doctor.

## **OXYCONTIN®**

Oxycontin® is a prescription narcotic used as a painkiller. It contains oxycodone and taken without a prescription can be very dangerous. Often used as a substitute for heroin, it causes nausea, confusion, breathing difficulty, and possibly loss of consciousness and coma.

## **PCP**

PCP is a hallucinogen which is very dangerous. It has similar effects as LSD. PCP causes illusions, hallucinations, blurred vision, convulsions, and more plus can cause effects that imitate schizophrenia. It is also known for its bad trips.

## **ROHYPNOL**

Rohypnol is a powerful sedative. It was once a common “date rape” drug but GHB seems to be more widely used now. It can cause drunk like symptoms, blackouts, memory loss, disorientation, nausea, lack of motor coordination, and speaking difficulty.

## **STEROIDS**

Steroids are drugs used by athletes and others as a performance enhancer by promoting muscle growth. Its use causes premature baldness, mood swings, paranoia, nausea, vomiting, and joint aches. The risk of developing heart problems and some cancers is increased.

## **TOBACCO**

Nicotine, the main drug in tobacco, is one of the most used drugs in the United States. Nicotine is highly addictive. It is both a stimulant and sedative. Cigarette smoke has dozens of gases (mainly carbon monoxide) and tar. Tar exposes users to higher rates of lung cancer, emphysema, and bronchial disorders. Carbon monoxide increases the chance of cardiovascular diseases. The Environmental Protection Agency has concluded that secondhand smoke causes lung cancer in adults. It also greatly increases the risk of sudden infant death and respiratory illnesses in children.