



DRUG FACT SHEET

Heroin

Heroin overdose is a particular risk because the amount and purity of the drug cannot be accurately known.

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| Class of drug: | Narcotic/Opiate |
| Main active ingredient: | Morphine, which is processed and extracted from the seed pod of certain poppy plants |
| What it looks like: | Powder (white to dark brown), tar-like substance |
| Street names: | Smack, Horse, Brown Sugar, Junk, Mud, Big H, Black Tar, White Boy |
| How it is used: | Injected, inhaled or smoked |

Paraphernalia used:

Needles/syringes; burned or dirty spoons/bottle cap tops; small plastic baggies with white powdery residue; small glass or metal pipes; lighters; belts/shoelaces missing (used to tie off injection sites); aluminum foil or gum wrappers with burn marks

Duration of high:

Euphoria sets in within seven seconds (intravenous injection), two to five minutes (intramuscular injection) or 10 to 15 minutes (sniffed or smoked). The high lasts from 10 to 30 minutes. Euphoria is followed by lethargy, sleepiness and apathy.

Effects:

Immediate—A rush, accompanied by a warm flushing of the skin, dry mouth and heavy feeling in the extremities, slowed breathing, slowed cardiac function, suppression of pain, clouded mental functioning, constricted (small pupils, slowed/slurred speech, nodding out (alternating between wakeful and drowsy state), droopy eyes, constipation, vomiting, runny nose, needle track marks visible on arms

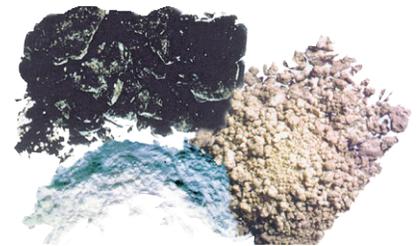
Long-term—contaminated injection equipment may transmit diseases such as HIV and hepatitis, collapsed veins, infection of heart lining and valves, tuberculosis

Withdrawal symptoms:

Restlessness, yawning, muscle and bone pain, cold flashes with goose bumps, diarrhea, vomiting and insomnia. Major withdrawal symptoms peak between 24 to 48 hours after the last dose and subside after a week. Heroin withdrawal is never fatal in otherwise healthy adults.

Overdose symptoms:

Blue lips, not breathing right, won't wake up, unresponsive to pain



Clockwise from top: Black tar heroin, brown powdered heroin and white powdered heroin

U.S. information

According to the National Survey on Drug Use and Health, about 914,000 Americans reported using heroin in the past year. The number of people who used heroin for the first time in 2014 was 212,000 compared to 169,000 in 2013.

Heroin use has been increasing among young adults aged 18–25, but has remained steady among teens aged 12–17. In 2015, 2.1 percent of high school students in the United States reported trying heroin at least once in their lifetime.

Sources: American Medical Association, National Institute on Drug Abuse, Drug Abuse Warning Network, National Drug Intelligence Center, U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration, Roosevelt University Consortium of Drug Policy, U.S. Centers for Disease Control Youth Risk Behavior Survey, 2015