

Manitoba Addictions Awareness Week

Fast Facts on "Ecstasy"

- MDMA (N-methyl-3,4-methylenedi-oxymethamphetamine) has properties of the drug classes stimulants and hallucinogens. Ecstasy has also been called E., XTC, X, Adam, Eve, Clarity, Lover's Speed, Rave, Euphoria, Love Doves.
- Ecstasy is manufactured mainly in illegal labs.
- Ecstasy is used mainly at raves, clubs or concerts. It is usually taken orally in tablet or capsule form. A dose is approximately 50 to 200 mg. Ecstasy can also be injected or snorted.
- Effects usually begin 60 to 90 minutes after the drug has been taken and last 3-6 hours.

Short-term Effects May Include:

- strong sense of pleasure and confidence
- increased feelings of sociability, openness, empathy,
- excess energy and hyperactivity or intense relaxation
- sense of alertness
- dry mouth and throat, nausea or vomiting, loss of appetite
- increase in heart rate, blood pressure and breathing
- muscle cramping and tension
- blood flow to muscles increase causing
- dilated pupils, rapid eye movement and blurred vision
- clenching of jaw muscles, teeth grinding and jaw pain
- sweating or chills, faintness, and fatigue
- distortions in thinking such as perception of time, and memory.
- anxiety, paranoia or panic attacks
- hallucinations

Long-term Effects May Include:

- Forgetfulness, poor concentration and feeling depressed mid-week has been reported after weekend use. The depression can be significant enough to require professional help.
- Fatigue, sleep disturbances, confusion, panic, anxiety, paranoia, depression (suicidal feelings to those who are susceptible have been reported weeks after taking the drug).
- Frequent users may be at serious risk for liver damage or other serious side effects. Liver damage may be indicated by a rash that looks like acne.

Other Risks:

- Dancing or any other physical activity can lead to dehydration, hypertension, high blood pressure, and an increase in body temperature which can result in muscle breakdown, heart and kidney failure.
- Heart attacks, strokes, liver failure and seizures have been reported.
- It can interfere with blood clotting causing the individual to bruise easily or start to bleed from their mouth, nose and gastrointestinal tract. In severe cases, the individual can bleed to death.
- Some theories say that some people may be allergic and therefore experience major overdose type response i.e. hyperthermia, clotting abnormalities and liver problems.
- Pills sold as ecstasy have been known to contain other drugs such as LSD, speed, heroin or ephedrin
- Complications can arise from how the drug is made. It is not uncommon for a drug that has been sold as "ecstasy" to contain other drugs or substances that may be harmful.
- Some testing on animals has raised concerns that chronic use may cause long term, perhaps permanent damage to the brain.
- Convulsions, psychotic episodes and acute anxiety reactions ("a bad trip") have been reported. Some people have reported flashbacks.
- Physical dependence is not generally a problem, however psychological dependence and cravings can lead to chronic use. Tolerance develops quickly.
- On rare occasions a psychotic experience may be triggered or mental health problems may worsen for people who are already experiencing problems in that area.

* REMEMBER: A person's experience with any drug can vary. There are a number of things that have an impact on person's experience with a drug including but not limited to: the amount and strength of the drug consumed, the setting in which the drug is used, a person's mood or expectations prior to using the drug as well as the person's past experience with that drug.

