

## Health Risks Associated with the Use of Illicit Drugs and Alcohol

### Alcohol Effects

Alcohol consumption causes a number of marked changes in behavior. Even low doses significantly impair the judgment and coordination required to drive a car safely, increasing the likelihood that the driver will be involved in an accident. Low to moderate doses of alcohol also increases the incidence of a variety of aggressive acts, including spouse and child abuse. Moderate to high doses of alcohol cause marked impairments in higher mental functions, severely altering a person's ability to learn and remember information. Very high doses cause respiratory depression and death. If combined with other depressants of the central nervous system, much lower doses of alcohol will produce the effects just described. Repeated use of alcohol can lead to dependence. Sudden cessation of alcohol intake is likely to produce withdrawal symptoms, including severe anxiety, tremors, hallucinations, and convulsions. Alcohol withdrawal can be life threatening. Long-term consumption of large quantities of alcohol, particularly when combined with poor nutrition, can also lead to permanent damage to vital organs such as the brain and the liver. Mothers who drink alcohol during pregnancy may give birth to infants with fetal alcohol syndrome. These infants have irreversible physical abnormalities and mental retardation. In addition, research indicates that children of alcoholic parents are at greater risk than other youngsters of becoming alcoholics.

|                             | Physical Dependence | Psychological Dependence | Possible Effects       | Effects of Overdose        |
|-----------------------------|---------------------|--------------------------|------------------------|----------------------------|
| <b>Narcotics</b>            |                     |                          |                        |                            |
| <b>Heroin</b>               | High                | High                     |                        |                            |
| <b>Morphine</b>             | High                | High                     |                        |                            |
| <b>Codeine</b>              | Moderate            | Moderate                 | Euphoria               | Slow and shallow breathing |
| <b>Hydrocodone</b>          | High                | High                     | Drowsiness             | Clammy skin                |
| <b>Hydromorphone</b>        | High                | High                     | Respiratory depression | Convulsions                |
| <b>Oxycodone</b>            | High                | High                     | Constricted Pupils     | Coma                       |
| <b>Methadone and LAAM</b>   | High                | High                     | Nausea                 | Possible death             |
| <b>Fentanyl and Analogs</b> | High                | High                     |                        |                            |
| <b>Other Narcotics</b>      | High – Low          | High – Low               |                        |                            |
| <b>Depressants</b>          |                     |                          | -->                    |                            |

|   |               |               |   |   |
|---|---------------|---------------|---|---|
|   |               |               |   |   |
| <b>Chloral Hydrate</b>                  | Moderate      | Moderate      | Slurred speech  | Shallow respiration   |
| <b>Barbiturates</b>                     | High-Moderate | High-Moderate | Disorientation  | Clammy skin   |
| <b>Benzodiazepines</b>                  | Low           | Low           | Drunken behavior w/o odor of alcohol                                      | Dilated pupils<br>Weak and rapid pulse                        |
| <b>Glutethimide</b>                     | High          | Moderate      |   | Come  |
| <b>Other Depressants</b>                | Moderate      | Moderate      |   | Possible Death  |
| <b>Stimulants</b>                       |               |               |   |   |
| <b>Cocaine</b>                          | Possible      | High          | Increased alertness   | Agitation   |
| <b>Amphetamine/<br/>Methamphetamine</b> | Possible      | High          | Euphoria<br><br>Increased pulse rate and blood pressure<br><br>Excitation | Increased body temp.<br><br>Hallucinations<br><br>Convulsions |
| <b>Methylphenidate</b>                  | Possible      | High          | Insomnia  | Possible death  |
| <b>Other Stimulants</b>                 | Possible      | High          | Loss of appetite  |   |
| <b>Cannabis</b>                         |               |               |   |   |
| <b>Marijuana</b>                        | Unknown       | Moderate      | Euphoria<br><br>Relaxed inhibitions                                       | Fatigue<br><br>Paranoia                                       |
| <b>Tetrahydrocannabinol</b>             | Unknown       | Moderate      | Increased appetite  | Possible psychosis  |
| <b>Hashish and Hashish Oil</b>          | Unknown       | Moderate      | Disorientation  |   |
| <b>Hallucinogens</b>                    |               |               |   |   |
| <b>LSD</b>                              | None          | Unknown       | Illusions and hallucinations  | Longer  |
| <b>Mescaline and Peyote</b>             | None          | Unknown       | Altered perception of time and  | More intense 'trip' episodes                                  |

|                                  |         |         |   |                |
|----------------------------------|---------|---------|---|----------------|
|                                  |         |         | distance  |                |
| <b>Amphetamine Variants</b>      | Unknown | Unknown |   | Psychosis      |
| <b>Phencyclidine and Analogs</b> | Unknown | High    |   | Possible Death |
| <b>Other Hallucinogens</b>       | None    | Unknown |   |                |
| <b>Anabolic Steroids</b>         |         |         |   |                |
| <b>Testosterone</b>              | Unknown | Unknown | Virilization<br>Acne                                      | Unknown        |
| <b>Nandrolone</b>                | Unknown | Unknown | Testicular atrophy<br>Gynecomastia<br>Aggressive behavior |                |
| <b>Oxymetholone</b>              | Unknown | Unknown | Edema   |                |