

Mixing Heroin and Other Drugs:

- **Alcohol** and heroin both depress the central nervous system. The combination has proven fatal
- **Amphetamines** mixing uppers and downers is not good; speed's stimulant effects may mask the opiate effects of heroin and make overdoses more likely
- **cocaine** mixing the two (known as a 'speedball') is which in turn slows the heart. As a result, the heart can lose rhythm entirely. John Belushi and River Phoenix both died after taking speedballs.
- **Ecstasy** MDMA's effects may mask opiate effects of heroin and make overdose easier
- **Ghb** is a liquid sedative anesthetic; mixing it with heroin could fatally depress the central nervous system
- **LSD** psychedelic drugs mess with the effects of opiates, making them unpredictable and usually unpleasant
- **Mushrooms** the same with that of LSD

WHAT IS HEROIN WITHDRAW LIKE

When the drug is discontinued the user will experience physical withdrawal. The withdrawal can begin within a few hours since it was last administered. Withdrawal symptoms include:

- Restlessness
- Insomnia
- Diarrhea
- Vomiting
- Extreme Cravings
- Nausea
- Sweating
- Cold flashes with goose bumps
- Kicking movements
- Muscle and bone pain

Major withdrawal symptoms peak between 48 and 72 hours after the last dose and subside after about a week. Sudden withdrawal by heavily dependent users who are in poor health can be fatal.



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Heroin



WHAT IT IS

Heroin is a member of the opiate family of drugs that come from the opium poppy plant. Heroin is a highly addicted drug that is processed from morphine. It is a depressant that inhibits the central nervous system.

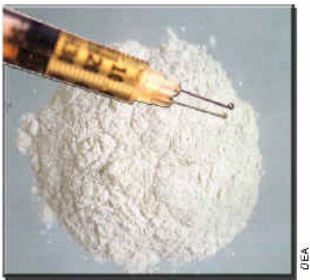
Heroin is a “downer” that effects the brain’s pleasure systems and interferes with the brain’s ability to perceive pain.

Names: Heroin, dust, “H,” horse, junk, smack, Harry, scag, brown sugar, black tar

Usage: Heroin is injected, snorted, or smoked. Many new, younger users begin by snorting or smoking heroin because they wish to avoid the social stigma attached to injection drug use. It is often mistakenly believed that snorting or smoking heroin will not lead to addiction. Users who snort or smoke heroin at times graduate to injection because as their bodies become conditioned to the drug, the effects it produces are less intense.

Legal Status: Heroin is illegal. Heroin is a schedule 1 substance under the Controlled Substances Act. Schedule 1 drugs have a high potential for abuse and serve no legitimate medical purpose in the United States.

Appearance: The appearance of heroin can vary dramatically. In the eastern U.S., heroin generally is sold as a powder that is white (or off-white) in color. (Generally, the purer the heroin the whiter the color, because variations in color result from the presence of impurities.) In the western U.S., most of the heroin available is a solid substance that is black in color. This type of heroin, known as black tar, may be sticky or hard to the touch.



EFFECTS OF HEROIN

Users who inject heroin will feel a euphoric surge or “rush” as it is often called. Their mouths may become dry. The drug has a depressant effect on the central nervous system, slowing breathing and suppressing pain. They may begin to nod in and out and their arms and legs will feel heavy and rubbery. They may experience a diminished mental capacity and dulled emotions. The effects of heroin lasts three to four hours after each dose has been administered. In addition to the powerful rush of pleasure, heroin use induces:

- Drowsiness
- Difficulty concentrating
- Vision problems
- Slowed breathing
- Nausea and vomiting
- Constipation
- Reduced sex drive
- Increased urination
- Low body temperature
- Sweating

WHAT ARE THE HAZARDS OF HEROIN?

Heroin overdoses which can result whether the drug is snorted, smoked, or injected can cause slow and shallow breathing, convulsions, coma and even death. All heroin users not just those who inject the drug risk becoming addicted. Heroin users who inject the drug expose themselves to additional risk, including contracting HIV, Hepatitis B and C and other blood born viruses. Chronic users who inject heroin also risk scarred or collapsed veins, infection of the heart lining and valves, abscesses, pneumonia, tuberculosis, and liver and kidney disease.

**It doesn't have to be this way.
Confidential help is
available.**

HAZARDS & SIGNS

Short-term hazards include:

- Physical sensation rush
- Slow shallow breathing
- Confused poor mental functioning
- Nausea/vomiting
- Dulling of pain
- Miscarriage

Long term hazards include:

- Addiction
- Infectious diseases (HIV/AIDS, TB, Hepatitis B and C and other blood born illnesses)
- Collapsed veins
- Bacterial infections
- Infections and abscesses
- Damage to heart lining and valves
- Arthritis
- Rheumatologic problems

Signs of Heroin Overdose:

The following are some obvious signs of heroin overdose

- Shallow breathing
- Pinpoint pupils
- Bluish skin, fingernails and/or lips
- Weak pulse
- Low blood pressure
- Constipation
- Cold/clammy skin
- Seizures
- Drowsiness
- Dry mouth
- Tongue discoloration
- Stomach spasms
- Coma
- Disorientation
- Muscle spasms/rigid muscles

especially dangerous; the two drugs potentiate each other, increasingly their effectiveness twofold. Cocaine acts as a powerful stimulant and raises the heart rate, but its effects wear off quicker than heroin, which in turn slows the heart. As a result, the heart can lose rhythm entirely. John Belushi and River Phoenix both died after taking speedballs.