

Heroin

DID YOU KNOW...

- Heroin is a highly addictive drug made from morphine, a substance taken from the seed pod of the Asian poppy plant. Heroin usually appears as a white or brown powder, or as a black sticky substance known as “black tar heroin.” Other names for heroin are: “H,” “Big H,” “brown sugar,” “dope,” “horse,” “junk,” “mud,” “skag,” “smack,” “thunder,” “hell dust” and “nose drops.”
- Heroin can be injected into the vein or muscle, smoked in a water pipe or standard pipe, mixed in a marijuana joint or regular cigarette, inhaled as smoke through a straw, or snorted as a powder through the nose.
- Heroin is a “downer” or depressant. The initial effects of heroin are a rush, along with a warm skin flush, dry mouth, and body heaviness. Following this, the



user goes “on the nod,” an alternately wakeful and drowsy state. Mental functioning is “clouded,” speech is slowed or slurred, and body functions are slowed. Other effects may include small pupils, droopy eyelids, impaired night vision, vomiting and constipation.

- Chronic use may cause collapsed veins, infection of heart lining and valves and liver disease. Heroin use may also cause problems with the lungs, including different types of pneumonia. Street heroin may have additives that result in clogging the blood vessels that lead to the lungs, liver, kidneys or brain. This can cause infection or even death of small patches of cells in vital organs.
- Heroin is mentally and physically addictive. The more a person uses, the more he has to use to achieve the same intensity or effect. When a person becomes physically addicted, withdrawal symptoms occur if use is reduced or stopped. This can happen as early as a few hours after the last dose. Withdrawal symptoms may include: intense cravings, restlessness, muscle and bone pain, insomnia, diarrhea, vomiting, and cold flashes with goose bumps. Major symptoms peak between 48–72 hours after the last dose, and disappear after about a week. Sudden withdrawal by heavy users in poor physical condition can be fatal.