A CAMH PUBLICATION

How can I reduce my risks?

CHOOSE NOT TO USE COCAINE!

DON'T GET INTO A CAR WITH SOMEONE WHO IS HIGH.

DON'T MIX COCAINE WITH OTHER DRUGS (INCLUDING ALCOHOL AND PRESCRIPTION DRUGS).

TRY TO QUIT!

How can I tell if someone has overdosed and is in trouble?

These are the signs of cocaine overdose:
- loss of consciousness or coma
- faster breathing
- seizures or uncontrollable twitching
- racing or irregular heartbeat
- chest pain.

Know what to do!

Send for emergency medical help. Call 911 right away. This could be a life-or-death situation!

How can I get help?

Do you, a family member or a friend have a problem with substance use? If you want help, you may want to talk to someone you trust, such as your doctor, a teacher, a health nurse, or a guidance or addiction counsellor. You might also want to contact an addiction assessment centre or a self-help group such as Cocaine Anonymous or Narcotics Anonymous (look in the Yellow Pages of your phone book under "Addictions"). Here are some other places to look for help:

- Centre for Addiction and Mental Health’s Information Centre at 1 800 463-8673
- Kids Help Phone at 1 800 668-6868
- Ontario Drug and Alcohol Registry of Treatment at 1 800 565-8603 or www.dart.on.ca.

For more information on addiction and mental health issues, or a copy of this resource, please contact CAMH’s R. Samuel McLaughlin Addiction and Mental Health Information Centre; Ontario toll-free: 1 800 463-8673 Toronto: 416 595-6111

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Fast Facts

Cocaine was first isolated from the leaves of the coca bush in 1860.

In the 1860s, psychiatrist Sigmund Freud wrote scientific papers that praised cocaine as a treatment for many ailments, including depression and alcohol and opioid addictions. After this, cocaine became widely and legally available in patent medicines and soft drinks.

What is cocaine?

Cocaine is a very addictive stimulant drug. Stimulants make people feel more alert and energetic. Cocaine can also make people feel “high.” Crack is cocaine in a form that can be smoked.

Cocaine comes from the leaves of the coca bush, which grows in the Andes Mountains in South America. Today, most of the world’s coca is grown and made into cocaine in South America.

What does cocaine look like? How is it used?

Cocaine can be:
- a powder (for snorting)
- a liquid (for injecting)
- a rock or chunks (for smoking)
- a paste or cream (for applying to the skin)
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White cocaine powder is sometimes “cut” (mixed) with things that look like it, or with other drugs. What may be added:
- sugars
- local anesthetics (drugs that numb part of the body)
- caffeine
- other unknown substances.

About COCAINE

Street names

Powder

lines

snow

crack

coke

local anesthetics

flak

FREEBASE

SNOH

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Who uses cocaine?

- In 2005, about one Ontario student in 10 (4.4%) in grades 7 to 12 said he or she had used cocaine at least once in the past year. This is almost 43,000 students.
- Cocaine use is about the same in male students (4.5%) and females (4.3%).
- About one Ontario student in 100 (0.1%) said he or she had used crack at least once in the past year. This is about 19,300 students.
- Cocaine and crack use among students decreased during the 1980s, but since 1993 it has been rising again.

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For at least 4,000 years, people in Peru and Bolivia have chewed coca leaves to make them feel less hungry and tired, when working hard without much food at high altitudes.

true or false

1. Kids can’t die from snorting cocaine.
2. More people die using ecstasy than from using cocaine.
3. When someone wants to smuggle cocaine, they sometimes swallow a balloon filled with cocaine to hide it.
4. It’s easy to know what a dealer looks like.

Answers

1. FALSE.
2. FALSE.
3. TRUE.
4. FALSE.
Cocaine and its effects

Is cocaine addictive?

Yes, cocaine is a very addictive drug.

Not everyone who uses cocaine becomes addicted. But if you do, it can be one of the hardest drugs to quit. It is also hard to stop off cocaine if you do quit, because the memory of the “high” feeling is so powerful.

People who become addicted to cocaine feel a strong need for the drug, even when they know it causes them problems. Getting and taking cocaine can become the most important thing in their lives.

Crack is the most addictive form of cocaine. But any form of cocaine can lead to addiction. It partly depends on how much you use, and how often you use it.

Cocaine can lead to addiction. It partly depends on how much you use, and how often you use it.

How does cocaine make you feel?

Cocaine can make you feel:

• euphoric, confident, alert, talkative, excited and less sleepy
• restless, nervous, irritable, unable to relax or sleep
• paranoid (e.g., imagining things, believing people

Cocaine can cause a heart attack or stroke, even in healthy people.

Smoking crack cocaine can hurt your lungs.

Injecting cocaine can cause infections from shared needles (e.g., AIDS, hepatitis).

Injecting cocaine that has been cut with impure or unsanitary material can lead to complications and infections.

Is cocaine addictive?

No. Cocaine possession is a serious criminal offence in Canada.

Is cocaine dangerous?

Yes! Cocaine can be very dangerous, even if you use it just once.

• A person can overdose on even a small amount of cocaine.

• Using cocaine while breastfeeding can make the baby sick.

Is cocaine legal?

No. Cocaine use is linked with theft and violence. It is also linked to problems with thinking, judgement, increased chance of getting hurt, and getting a sexually transmitted disease.

Using cocaine for a long time can lead to mental health problems, including psychosis, anxiety, depression and paranoia.

Long-term cocaine use can also cause weight loss, malnutrition, poor health, sexual problems (like difficulty getting an erection), and loss of friends and money.

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The Conviction

The Sentence

Having a small amount of cocaine for personal use
Up to $2,000 fine and/or up to seven years in prison

Possessing cocaine for the purpose of trafficking (selling or giving)
Up to life in prison

Bringing cocaine in from another country
Up to life in prison

In 2004, about 3,416 kg of cocaine was seized either in or en route to Canada— that’s the equivalent of the weight of a fully grown female African elephant!
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Does it become more sensitive to negative effects such as anxiety, psychosis (losing contact with reality), and seizures.

How does cocaine make you feel?

How does cocaine make you feel depends on how much you use, how often you use and what form you use. It also depends on whether you have taken any alcohol or other drugs.

Cocaine can make you feel:
- Energetic, confident, alert, talkative, excited and less sleepy
- Agitated, nervous, irritable, unable to relax or sleep
- Unable to sleep
- Delusional or disturbed
- Aggressive

People who use cocaine regularly may get used to its effects. This means they need to take more and more of the drug to feel the same way. They may also become more sensitive to negative effects such as anxiety, psychosis (losing contact with reality), and seizures.

How do you feel after you have used cocaine?

When the cocaine high fades, people can have a big low (a “crash”). They may feel anxious, depressed, tired, hungry or even suicidal.

People may also crave more of the drug, and take more cocaine to come out of the crash. Some people stay high by using cocaine for hours or days (“binge”).

Bingeing to stay high leads quickly to addiction.

How long does the feeling last?

Not long. Cocaine acts quickly, but the effects don’t last long.
- When snorted or injected, cocaine takes effect in minutes, and the effect may last up to one hour.
- When smoked, cocaine takes effect in seconds, and the effect lasts only five to 10 minutes.

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THE CONVICTION THE SENTENCE

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How can I reduce my risks?

- Choose not to use cocaine!
- Try to quit!

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- Cocaine use is about the same in male students (4.5%) and females (4.3%).
- About one Ontario student in 50 (2%) said he or she had used crack at least once in the past year. This is about 19,300 students.
- Cocaine and crack use among students decreased during the 1980s, but since 1993 it has been rising again.

Cocaine looks like? How is it used?

Cocaine comes from the leaves of the coca bush, which grows in the Andes Mountains in South America. Today, most of the world's coca is grown and made into cocaine in South America.

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These are the signs of cocaine overdose:

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- faster breathing
- seizures or uncontrollable twitching
- racing or irregular heartbeat
- chest pain
- overheating
- faster breathing
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REDUCING RISKS AND GETTING HELP

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Answers

1. True. Cocaine can be cut with other substances.
2. False. Cocaine can be cut with other substances.
3. False. Cocaine can be cut with other substances.
4. True. Cocaine can be cut with other substances.

How can I get help?

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