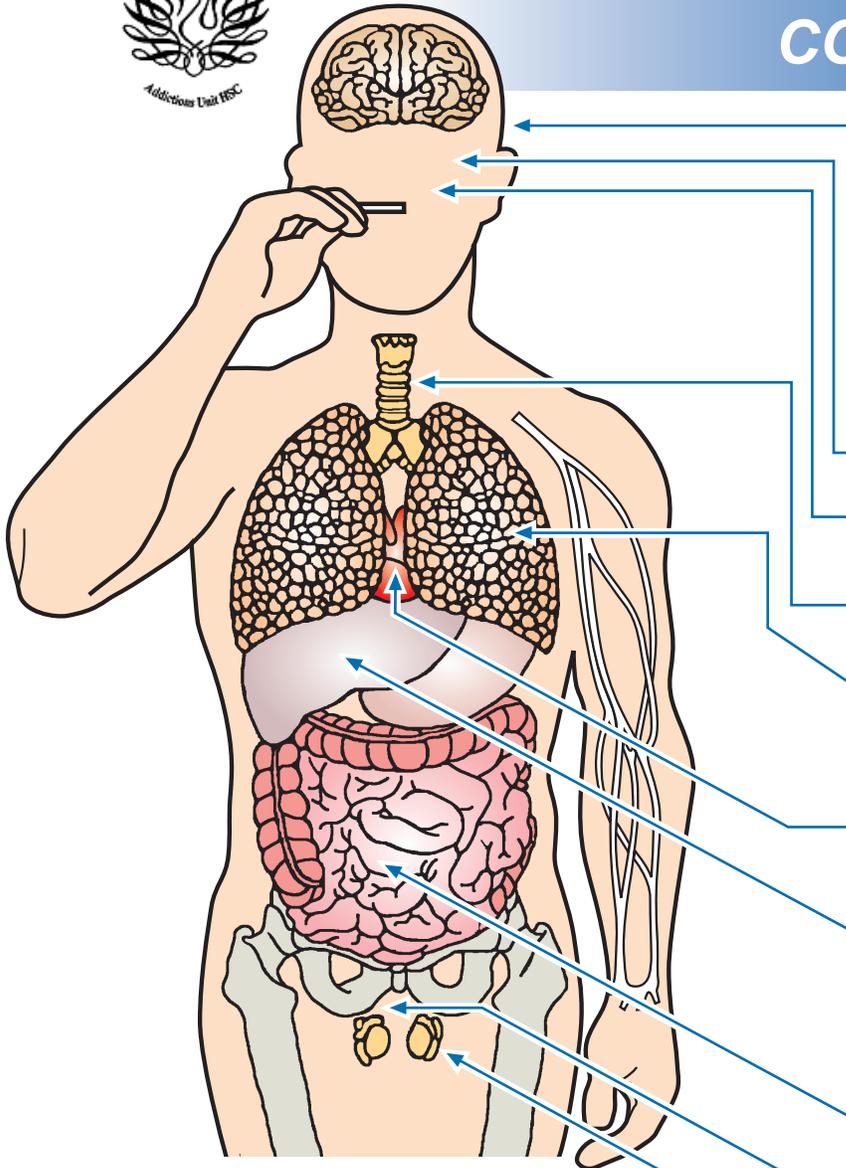




The Harmful Effects of COCAINE AND CRACK



BRAIN

Euphoria And Depression

- Early effects include euphoria lasting 5-15 minutes. A crushing “low” (depressed) feeling follows the “high”, leaving you feeling very sad and hopeless and craving more of the drug.

Brain Damage And Addiction

- Cocaine and crack have an overwhelming effect on the “pleasure centers” in the brain. The drugs interfere, alter, damage, and take control of specialized cells that regulate pleasure, well being, and mood. Regular use may shut off brain’s ability to ever be or feel “normal” without cocaine. Long-term use may cause permanent biological drug addiction.

EYES

- Dilation of pupils. Vision blurred.

NOSE

- “Snorting” can cause holes in nasal septum, continual runny nose, and bleeding.

THROAT

- Inhaling cocaine vapors causes hoarseness, coughing, and constant sore throat.

LUNGS

- Smoking cocaine damages lung cells ability to process gases, leaving user with constant cough and shortness of breath. Use may result in respiratory failure – brain stops signaling muscles that control breathing to stop working.

HEART

- Constricts heart’s blood vessels, increasing blood pressure. This may trigger heart attack, heart failure, irregular heartbeat, and sudden death.

LIVER

- Cocaine and crack can damage liver’s ability to detoxify blood, while reducing production of crucial enzymes needed for normal body functions.
- Hepatitis can be contracted and cause serious liver damage, lead to cirrhosis, and liver cancer. Hepatitis is highly contagious (can be passed on to others)

INTESTINES

- Blood supply is reduced to intestines, resulting in nausea, diarrhea, painful cramps and inflammation

BLADDER

- Increased need to urinate.

REPRODUCTIVE SYSTEM

Males & Females

- Regular use of cocaine can result in loss of interest in sex, decreased sexual performance, risk of impotence and infertility

Pregnancy & Unborn Babies

- Cocaine and crack cause miscarriages, developmental disorders, and complications during birth
- Can result in premature separation of placenta from uterus leading to premature births or stillbirths
- Babies run greater risk of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS). Cocaine babies have higher risk of respiratory, kidney trouble, and genital malformation. Visual problems, lack of coordination, and retardation are common.
- Babies can suffer strokes and heart attacks.

BODY WEIGHT

- Loss of appetite can be so severe that it leads to dramatic weight loss and malnutrition

CENTRAL NERVOUS SYSTEM

- Increases blood pressure, heart rate, breathing, and body temperature.
- Suppresses desire for food, sex, and sleep.
- Can cause strokes, brain seizures, respiratory failure, heart attack, convulsions, and death.

PSYCHOLOGICAL & PERSONALITY CHANGES

- Irritability, anxiety, panic attacks, excitable, hyper, erratic, confused, depressed, non-stop babbling, sleeplessness, chronic fatigue, short tempers, bizarre, aggressive, violent, suicidal behavior, overly suspicious, have delusions, paranoia, and hallucinations are common symptoms.

BLOOD VESSELS

- Cocaine and crack cause blood vessels to constrict, increasing blood pressure, and risk of heart attack and stroke.

TRANSMITTING DISEASES

- Users sharing needles run high risk of infecting themselves with hepatitis or deadly AIDS. Users may pass these diseases to their sexual partners or unborn babies.



The Harmful Effects of **COCAINE AND CRACK**

What happens to cocaine in the body?

People use cocaine in a few ways: swallow it, inject it using a needle, snort it, inhale it, or in the case of crack cocaine, smoke it. It has an effect on the person within seconds and the “high” lasts a short time (about 5-15 minutes) and is followed by a “low” or depressed mood that leaves the person craving for more cocaine.

What are the short-term effects?

- Cocaine can make you feel intense pleasure. You can feel alert, energetic, and confident.
- Using cocaine increases your breathing, heart rate and blood pressure. It dilates your pupils, lessens your appetite and lessens your need to sleep.
- Large doses of cocaine can produce euphoria, severe agitation, anxiety, erratic and violent behavior, twitching, hallucinations, blurred vision, headaches, chest pains, rapid shallow breathing, muscle spasms, nausea and fever.
- An overdose can cause seizures, strokes, heart attacks, kidney failure, coma and death. Use is linked with suicides, murder and fatal accidents.

What are the long-term effects?

- Heavy cocaine users can feel depressed, restless, agitated and nervous. They can have sleeping, eating and sexual problems.
- Cocaine users can have drastic mood swings, trouble knowing what’s real and what’s not, hallucinations and paranoia. High blood pressure and irregular heartbeat occurs as well.
- Repeated use may cause long-lasting problems with memory, attention and behavior.
- Chronic snorting causes stuffed, runny, chapped or bleeding nose and holes in the barrier between the nostrils. Those who share snorting straws or inject cocaine risk infections that includes hepatitis and HIV, the virus that cause AIDS. Freebase and crack smokers report severe throat and lung problems. They may cough up black phlegm or blood.
- If you use drugs often, you can have serious personal problems. Using drugs can come first before your family and friends. You may keep on using even when your job or schoolwork suffers, or when you run into money or legal problems.
- Using cocaine while pregnant can cause miscarriage or premature birth. The baby may have a small head, low birth weight, blocked blood vessels in the brain, and other physical problems. The baby may cry a lot because of sleep and feeding problems. Infants who are breastfed by mothers using cocaine can suffer seizures and extreme irritability.

What about tolerance?

With long-term use of cocaine, the person will notice an increased need to use higher doses of the drug to achieve the desired effects and this is known as “tolerance”.

What about withdrawal?

When a person suddenly stops using cocaine, he or she will have withdrawal symptoms but these are not life threatening. Typical cocaine withdrawal consists of depressed mood (which may include mood swings, feeling sad or suicidal, or feelings of anger or irritability), hunger and large appetite, and feeling tired and sleeping more than usual. These feelings may be quite intense in the first few days after stopping using cocaine but over time (sometimes weeks or months) these feelings will be less intense and easier to cope with.



TRIGGERS	PLAN FOR TRIGGERS
<input type="checkbox"/> WHEN YOU ARE ON HOLIDAYS	
<input type="checkbox"/> WHEN YOU FEEL IRRITABLE OR TIRED	
<input type="checkbox"/> ON SPECIAL OCCASIONS (CHRISTMAS, BIRTHDAYS)	
<input type="checkbox"/> FEEL LONELY OR BORED	
<input type="checkbox"/> FEEL PRESSURED BY LACK OF MONEY OR DEBT	
<input type="checkbox"/> WHEN YOU HAVE MONEY TO SPEND	
<input type="checkbox"/> FEEL AFRAID	
<input type="checkbox"/> FED UP WITH LIFE OR WHEN YOU FEEL DEPRESSED	
<input type="checkbox"/> START THINKING YOU ARE HOOKED ON ALCOHOL OR DRUGS	
<input type="checkbox"/> NOT FEELING UNDERSTOOD	
<input type="checkbox"/> UNREALISTIC EXPECTATIONS OF SELF OR OTHERS	
<input type="checkbox"/> NOT USING SUPPORT SYSTEMS (ISOLATION)	
<input type="checkbox"/> GOING AROUND FRIENDS OR PLACES	
<input type="checkbox"/> RELATIONSHIP PROBLEMS	
<input type="checkbox"/> SELF-ESTEEM ISSUES	
<input type="checkbox"/> PROBLEMS AT WORK, SCHOOL OR HOME	
<input type="checkbox"/> WHEN YOU HAVE TO MEET NEW PEOPLE	