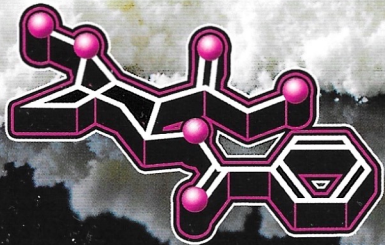


Cocaine



WHAT IS COCAINE?

- Cocaine is a bitter, numbing powder derived from the leaves of the coca plant, which mainly grows in South America.
- The leaves of the coca plant can be chewed or made into tea. Coca leaves are used as a mild stimulant similar to caffeine in many countries.
- Until 1929, Coca-Cola contained cocaine (hence the name) and so did many other over-the-counter food and medicine products.
- Cocaine is used in medicine today as a local anesthetic (numbing agent).
- Crack cocaine is made by heating baking soda with cocaine to make smokeable "rocks." Crack is, for all intents and purposes, just smokeable cocaine.

WHAT ARE THE EFFECTS?

- Cocaine is a stimulant with subjective effects similar to amphetamines, but much shorter acting (30–60 minutes when snorted).
- Cocaine typically causes feelings of confidence, alertness, talkativeness, and euphoria. People may also feel anxious, irritable, or overstimulated.
- Cocaine is usually snorted in bumps or small lines. The effects come on within minutes and peak after about 15–30 minutes.
- When injected, the effects are substantially more intense than snorting and come on in seconds.
- When smoked in the form of "crack," the effects come on in seconds and are much stronger than snorting, but wear off within minutes.
- Powder cocaine can't be smoked effectively, which is why it has to be converted into crack to produce a more substantial rush.

WHAT IS A TYPICAL DOSE?

- A typical snorted dose is between 30 to 70 mg.
- A typical smoked dose of crack is between 15 to 50 mg.
- Due to the short duration of action of cocaine in both hydrochloride (powder) and crack form, it's typical for consumers to build tolerance and require higher doses over a session (acutely) or over time (chronically).
- Cocaine can also be taken orally to reduce strain on the nasal cavities, although this is less common.
- As with all drugs, dosage is an important factor in the possible intensity of cocaine's positive AND negative effects.

BE CAREFUL

- The risk of cardiovascular (heart) injury with cocaine is higher than other popular stimulants. Cocaine is particularly risky for people who are already vulnerable to cardiovascular disease/failure.
- Cocaine causes a sudden increase in heart rate, blood pressure, and body temperature. Combining cocaine with exertion and/or other stimulants may cause overheating, arrhythmia (uneven heartbeat), and hypertension. Some people have sudden cardiovascular side effects, like arrhythmia, when using cocaine at lower doses.
- Higher doses, more frequent doses, and more intense routes of administration like smoking or injecting may cause unpleasant comedowns that can lead to compulsive redosing. Lower, less frequent doses often don't cause substantial comedowns.
- Like any drug, it's possible to use cocaine compulsively and develop a problematic relationship with it. It may be a good idea to take a break if you find yourself regularly using cocaine as a coping mechanism, or feeling very anxious at the thought of going without it for a period of time. It is strongly recommended to use cocaine in moderation and avoid daily use.

MORE HARM REDUCTION TIPS

- Repeated snorting can damage nasal cavities and sinuses. To reduce risks, use saline spray before, during, and after any snorting session.
- Use of cocaine or any other stimulant can lead to insomnia and sleep deprivation. Staying awake for two or more days dramatically increases anyone's risk of entering into a psychotic state.
- Sharing snorting devices can spread Hepatitis C and other diseases. Rolled up Post-It notes and personal straws can be used as disposable snorting devices.
- While crack is (literally) just cocaine that you can smoke, this route of administration usually holds an increased risk of compulsive redosing because smoking produces a *much* more intense high than snorting.



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