

SPEED

NUKKAN

What it does to you



Brutha 'n' sista, what is it?

Amphetamines (speed) are drugs that are classed as stimulants. They increase central nervous system activity – it speeds up the brain, makes breathing faster, makes the heart beat faster and increases energy level.

Effects

Straight away

- feel bulya, corka, alert with plenty of energy
- increased heart rate and blood pressure
- dry mouth
- don't want to eat as much
- hard to sleep
- pupils in your eyes get bigger
- become restless, irritable and more aggressive

High doses

- headaches
- dizziness
- can't see properly
- tremor/shaking
- fever
- high blood pressure
- irregular/uneven heartbeat
- loss of coordination
- sometimes collapse and have convulsions

Long-term use

- malnutrition from loss of appetite
- psychosis (hallucinations, strange behaviour, paranoia, delusions)
- possible permanent damage to brain cells

Tolerance and Dependence

If speed is used a lot, more of it will be needed to get the same effect – and this might also make the bad effects worse. Dependence can happen if speed is used regularly over a long time.



Withdrawal

If a dependent speed user stops or reduces their use, withdrawal can occur. In the first 24–48 hours the body will feel tired. There may be a time (10–14 days) after this when the following symptoms may occur:

- anxious
- irritable
- thinking flat out
- can't sleep properly
- craving
- depression

Reducing the risk

It is always safer not to use drugs but there are ways to reduce the risk:

- Don't drive or do risky things while using.
- Not using alone.
- Using smaller amounts – reduces the risk of developing dependence. Avoid daily use.
- Using while pregnant can affect the unborn baby.

In addition to the direct risks associated with using amphetamines there are additional risks from injecting them. There is a risk of catching a blood-borne virus from using injecting equipment that has been used by someone else. This includes not only needles and syringes but also swabs, filters, mixing spoons/water and tourniquets. Hepatitis C is the virus most frequently caught from injecting but there is also a risk of catching Hepatitis B and HIV/AIDS.

Bacterial infections can occur even when clean injecting equipment is used. Damage to veins can occur from repeated injections at the same site.



Mixing drugs

Taking other drugs when amphetamines are already in the bloodstream (or vice versa) is dangerous and increases the risk of overdose. In particular some antidepressants taken with amphetamines may cause a rapid rise in blood pressure and increase the risk of strokes and heart attacks.



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Help and more info

Alcohol & Drug Information Service:

1300 13 1340 (8:30am - 10:00pm, 7 days)

Aboriginal Drug & Alcohol Council (SA): 8351 9031

Aboriginal Health Council of SA: 8273 7200

Nunkuwarrin Yunti of South Australia: 8406 1600

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