**Physical Effects of Drugs on Body**

**What are ways that drugs can affect your physical health?**

Drugs harm to organs and systems in your body, such as your throat, stomach, lungs, liver, pancreas, heart, brain, nervous system.

* **Depressants** slow or 'depress' the function of the central nervous system
* **Hallucinogens** distort your sense of reality
* **Stimulants** speed or 'stimulate' the central nervous system
* You are more likely to have an **accident**
* You may find it **hard to sleep**, think, reason, remember and solve problems.
* **Needle marks and collapsed veins**, if you inject regularly
* **Baldness**
* **Male pattern hair growth** in women, such as facial hair
* **Jaw and teeth issues** due to clenching and grinding your teeth

**Casual users do not consider it as a harmful activity.**

It is an all-too-common scenario: A person experiments with an addictive drug like cocaine. Perhaps he intends to try it just once, for "the experience" of it. It turns out, though, that he enjoys the drug's euphoric effect so much that in ensuing weeks and months he uses it again -- and again. His drug use is now beyond his control. It is compulsive. He is addicted. And so, despite his heartfelt vow never again to use cocaine, he continues using it again and again.

**Results in long-term health outcomes by damaging organs and spreading infections.**

* **Physically effects** our height, weight, age, body fat and metabolism
* Drug use can also increase the **risk of contracting infections**. HIV and hepatitis C (a serious liver disease) can occur from sharing injection equipment
* Tobacco smoke can cause many cancers, methamphetamine can cause severe dental problems, known as meth mouth, and that opioids can lead to overdose and death
* You may act differently, feel differently and think differently if you have taken drugs. And you may struggle to control your actions and thoughts, but could not do so

**FACTS**

* In 1995 alone, more than 2,000 youth (ages 15 to 20) were killed in alcohol-related car crashes (National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, 1997).
* Nearly one-third of reported AIDS cases have been linked to injection drug use heroin, cocaine, or any drug that abusers inject. One way that HIV/AIDS, hepatitis, and other infectious diseases are spread is through the sharing of needles or other injection equipment.