

Drugs Used on the Rave & Cyberpunk Scene

The Cyberpunk Project

Here is a list of drugs used on the cyberpunk scene and in rave events. Ecstasy being one of these drugs which is most commonly associated with the cyberculture. Most of these descriptions are from Nicholas Saunders.

Drugs which produce a speedy effect

Amphetamine (amphetamine sulphate, speed, whizz, billy)

The most widely used dance drug, probably because it is seen as more reliable than Ecstasy and it is cheaper. Mostly sold in wraps about 10% pure, cut with filler or sometimes other drugs. Provides energy and is often used for dancing, carries the same physical dangers as MDMA but is addictive and may cause amphetamine psychosis. May be responsible for many deaths attributed to Ecstasy. Energy gained has to be repaid by exhaustion. Overdose results in feeling irritable and even violent. Lasts 8 hours. Snorted, dabbed with a finger onto the gums (this eventually rots the teeth), added to a drink or injected.

Methamphetamine (ice or crystal meth, speed in US)

A more potent relative of amphetamine. Very toxic over 25-30mg. Can be smoked, snorted or injected. Lasts up to 24 hours. A white crystalline solid. When heated gives off a vapour which is inhaled.

Cocaine (cocaine hydrochloride, coke, charlie, snow)

Similar to amphetamine in effect but gives a characteristic numbness where it touches the mouth or throat. Usually snorted up a nostril using a rolled up banknote. More expensive and less long lasting than amphetamine, which may account for its luxury image and cocky attitudes of users. Comes on quickly, but only lasts about half an hour. Became more popular as a dance drug (particularly in House and Garage clubs) in 1993 when poor quality Ecstasy flooded the market. May eventually dissolve the division between nostrils.

Crack cocaine (rocks, freebase)

Derived from cocaine. It is smoked and gives a shorter, bigger burst of energy but is more addictive. The high is almost instant, but quickly diminishes and is over in about 10 minutes.

Ephedrine

Ephedrine is found in the form of pseudoephedrine hydrochloride in an over-the-counter drug called Sudafed. About 3 tablets (60 mg each) have a similar effect to a wrap of speed. Ephedrine is a prescription drug with a maximum dose of 60 mg, but according to the British National Formulary an overdose produces restlessness, muscle spasms, racing heart, dry throat and cold extremities. It is "not recommended and should be avoided whenever possible". Note that the recreational dose is several times the prescription dose, and is potentially dangerous for people with weak hearts. Physical effects last 3-4 hours with gentle comedown, but you may feel high for several days.

Dexedrine (Dexys)

5 mg white scored tablet marked EVANS.DBS. Consists of dexamphetamine sulphate. Effect is similar to speed and causes high blood pressure. Should not be used with MAO inhibitors.

Cat (khat or qat)

A herb (*Catha Edulis*) that is chewed to produce an amphetamine-like effect. Somali immigrants use it as a legal high in the UK, and recently also party goers, although it is illegal in the US and some other

countries. It only works when fresh, so avoid if limp or dried up. The active component Cathinone or Methcathinone can be derived from the herb.

Poppers (Iso-butyl nitrite)

Legal in Britain, sold in sex shops and some clubs in small bottles. Sniffed or breathed in open mouth. Gives strong rushes of euphoria for a minute or two, especially while on E. Can cause black out, headache, nausea and even heart attacks. Less common is "English poppers" (amyl nitrate). Traditionally popular among gay men for sex as it relaxes the anus without loss of erection.

Drugs which produce relaxation

DXM (Dextromethorphan Hydrobromide)

Low dose is similar to alcohol producing carefree clumsiness with a touch of psychedelic and speedy effect. Intense and rhythmic music induces a state of euphoria and dancing becomes fun. On a higher dose imagination can become vividly experienced (not always pleasant), feelings of dissociation from the body can occur and on very high doses "profound alterations in consciousness". Contained in over-the-counter cough medicines sold as syrups, capsules and sometimes in pill form. Popular sources are Robitussin Maximum Strength Cough and Vicks Formula 44, but Drixoral Cough gelcaps contain 20 mg DXM. Cough mixtures listing other active ingredients may have unpleasant effects. Dose : 100-300 mg for someone weighing 70 kg. Topping up tends to increase duration rather than intensity. Duration : 4-8 hours. Avoid if you are taking an antidepressant of the MAOI type. Other types such as Prozac may increase the effect.

GHB, (liquid E or GBH)

An enthusiast says it removes inhibitions much like E but the biggest difference is that it slows you down until you eventually fall asleep. "After a night out on E and Speed, GHB is an alternative to smoking dope on comedown, and if you have sex it's good for a while until you fall asleep". My one experience was of feeling relaxed in a drunken way but giddy also and nauseous, but I was told this effect is caused by taking too much. It comes in small bottles, looks like water and tastes salty.

Temazepam (jellies or wobbly eggs)

Sold in 10-30mg capsules; also 10-20 mg tablets. Muscle relaxant and sleeping pill. Popular in Scotland when coming down after E, and its use is spreading. Normally swallowed, but when melted and injected can solidify and cause circulation problems. In 1994, 50 deaths were linked to Temazepam in the Glasgow area alone.

Drugs which produce altered states of consciousness

2CB (bees)

A mild psychedelic which lasts about 4 hours and is sometimes sold as ecstasy. For some people the effect is similar to ecstasy, but less warm and more intellectual. Does not remove the ability to have an erection, so it is possible for people to have sex who cannot on ecstasy. Dose : 15-25mg. People vary as to the correct dose, and this is critical as too much produces an uncomfortable edgy feeling. Often sold in small white 5mg tablets, sometimes as Erox "to treat male impotency".

Cannabis, marijuana (hash, smoke, draw, weed)

Most common illicit drug. Normally smoked either as dried leaves (grass) or the resin (hash) mixed with tobacco. Can also be eaten but the effect is not immediate so it's hard to judge how much to take. Effects are amusement, enhanced sound and colour, but can also produce paranoia and even LSD-like hallucinations in high doses. Generally regarded as harmless, but probably more harmful than tobacco. Skunk is a particularly potent variety of marijuana developed in Holland.

MDMA (ecstasy, XTC, adam, E, X)

Metheylenedimethoxymethamphetamine. Is an analog of MDA (methylenedimethoxyamphetamine). The physical effects of usual doses of MDMA are subtle and variable : some users report dryness of mouth, jaw clenching, teeth grinding, nystagmus (eye wiggles), sweating, or nausea. Others report feelings of profound physical relaxation. At higher doses (overdoses), the physical effects of MDMA resemble those of amphetamines : fast or pounding heartbeat, sweating, dizziness, restlessness, etc. The psychological effects are a bit more difficult to describe, since they are many and of widely varying effects. The major ones are : Entactogenesis ("touching within"), empathogenesis (a feeling of emotional closeness to others), and an enhancement of the senses.

Raves are common settings for taking MDMA. The atmosphere of a Rave is designed to be conducive to enjoying the MDMA experience, in the company of other people who may also be taking MDMA, or who can be as friendly and open without chemical assistance. MDMA's enhancement of proprioception (deep body sense) makes movement notably pleasant, so Ravers on MDMA often dance for long periods of time (remember to drink water frequently !). The feeling of unity and shared ecstatic joy at a successful Rave can be overwhelmingly wonderful. Some ravers regard this as spiritual or religious practice.

More, and actually everything, in [E for Ecstasy](#) by Nicholas Saunders.

Ketamine

Hardly a dance drug, but sometimes sold as Ecstasy, usually mixed with other drugs such as ephedrine and caffeine. Low doses produce a floppy relaxed feeling but higher doses produce dissociation (feeling separate from your body), near death experiences and insights. Higher doses may cause more powerful hallucinations than LSD; these can be confused with reality. Since it is used as an anaesthetic in far higher doses, Ketamine is not physically dangerous although its mental effects can be.

LSD (acid, A, trips and type names such as Microdots or Strawberries)

In low doses can enhance sound and lights, but in higher doses produces strong visual and emotional effects (not always pleasant). Blotters (small bits of paper with a logo) usually contain about 50 µg. The dose normally taken in the sixties was 250 µg. This produces a different level of consciousness which provides dramatic new insights but which may prove hard to relate to everyday life. Hallucinations can be powerful, but can be distinguished from reality. The experience may be personal when communication is difficult, although in some situations trips are shared as though telepathically. The very low dose of LSD (a thousand trips contain less drug than a single E) has two important results. There is so little that it causes no physical damage, and purity can be pretty well guaranteed simply because active amounts of other drugs would not fit on a blotter. The LSD experience is convincingly real, but in fact depends very much on the situation. This gives rise to myths about different varieties of acid having different effects. Bad trips are often blamed on strychnine (rat poison) in LSD, this is a myth. The amount of strychnine that could fit on a blotter would not be enough to have any effect. Bad trips result from your own fears becoming magnified, so don't do acid where you may not feel completely secure.

Magic Mushrooms (psilocybin, Liberty Caps, mushies, shrooms)

Effect : similar to LSD with the added attraction of being natural, free and even legal if eaten fresh from the field; processing, which could include handling and drying, makes it a Class A drug. Appearance : usually dried and are thin dark brown, but may be powdered. Typical mushroom smell. These are found in pasture in the autumn, but tend to be hidden in the grass. They are among the smallest mushrooms, and are distinguished by being uneven greyish rather than brown; their pointed caps and wiggly stems. The whole stem is active. Can be eaten or stewed and drunk as tea. Dose : 0.5-3 grams dried or 5-30 small mushrooms. Strength varies.