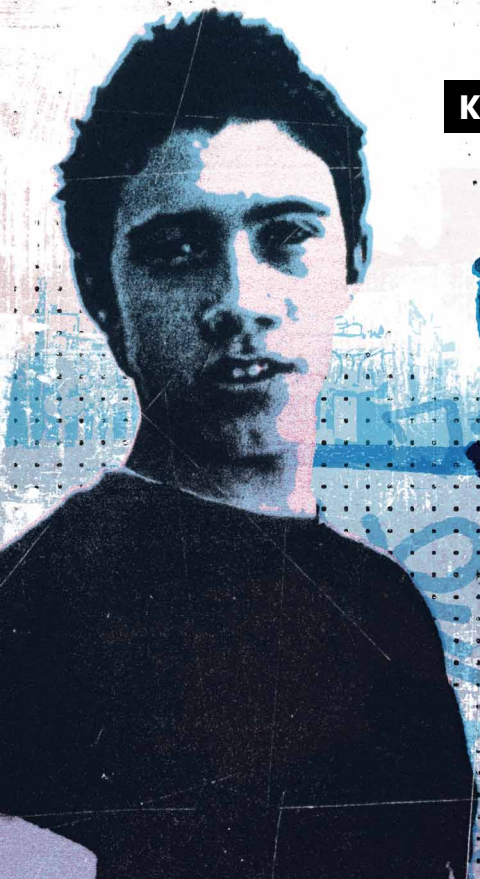


FRANK

the truth about drugs

KNOW THE SCORE



Drugs – lots of them – lots to know about them



Acid (LSD)	Junk (Heroin)
Base (Speed)	Liberties (Magic mushrooms)
Bhang (Cannabis)	Liquid Gold (Poppers)
Billy (Speed)	Lucy (LSD)
Black (Cannabis)	Marijuana (Cannabis)
Blow (Cannabis)	MDMA (Ecstasy)
Brown (Heroin)	Meth (Speed)
Charlie (Cocaine)	Mushies (Magic mushrooms)
Christine (Methylamphetamine)	Percy (Cocaine)
Coke (Cocaine)	Pills (Ecstasy)
Crazy medicine (Methylamphetamine)	Puff (Cannabis)
Crystal Meth (Methylamphetamine)	Resin (Cannabis)
Dope (Cannabis)	Rock (Crack cocaine)
Draw (Cannabis)	Shrooms (Magic mushrooms)
Dust (Cocaine)	Skag (Heroin)
E (Ecstasy)	Skunk (Cannabis)
Flash (LSD)	Smilies (LSD)
Freebase (Crack cocaine)	Snow (Cocaine)
Ganja (Cannabis)	Spliff (Cannabis)
Gear (Cannabis and Heroin)	Tab (LSD)
Glass (Methylamphetamine)	Tina (Methylamphetamine)
Grass (Cannabis)	Toot (Cocaine)
H (Heroin)	Trips (LSD)
Hash (Cannabis)	Wash (Crack cocaine)
Herb (Cannabis)	Weed (Cannabis)
Ice (Methylamphetamine)	White (Cocaine)
	Whizz (Speed)
	Yaba (Methylamphetamine)

Think everyone takes drugs? Most people don't. And many talk up what they've really done. So how do you know what's fact and what's fiction?

This A-Z booklet gives the lowdown on lots of the more commonly used legal and illegal drugs.

It tells you about their effects and their risks and also gives you info on other things to do with drug use that you might find interesting. Like what to do if you're worried about a mate. Or what happens when you mix drugs.

There are also stories from people who've been there, done that. And details on where to go for help and advice so that, when it comes to drugs, **you know the score.**

A

Alcohol

Looks like: Beer, lager, alcopops, cider, wine, spirits and shots.

Highs: In small amounts alcohol can help you relax and feel more sociable. It makes your emotions more intense, which is OK if you're in a good mood, but not so great if you're feeling low.

Lows: Too much alcohol and you'll start slurring your words and get clumsy or fall over. You might start crying or getting angry – or do something you regret. Mixing with other drugs can be dangerous, and drinking too much in one go can lead to alcohol poisoning which can

make you unconscious or even kill you. If you drink alcohol a lot, you can end up feeling depressed. A long-term drinking habit can cause liver, heart and stomach problems. You can also get addicted and become an alcoholic.

If you're under 18, it is illegal for someone to sell you alcohol. And illegal for someone else to buy it on your behalf.



Anabolic steroids (Class C)

Looks like: Tablets that are swallowed or a liquid that is injected.

Highs: Steroids help build up muscles if you take them as part of a strict exercise programme. They might also help people recover faster from strenuous exercise.

Lows: Steroids can make you aggressive, even if you are normally calm. They can also stop you growing properly.

- > **blokes - you can get erection problems, grow breasts, develop acne or your testicles could shrink**
- > **girls - you can get extra facial hair, a deep voice and your breasts could shrink**

You might start getting paranoid, confused or have trouble sleeping. Longer term, they can give you high blood pressure and liver or heart problems. After you stop taking them, you might feel tired or low for a while. There's a risk of damaging your veins or muscles if you inject.



B

Ben, 15

“When I think of dealers I think of big time gangsters or people outside clubs. Not me. All I did was try to sort a few friends out with some pills and a bit of whizz. The police haven’t told me what’s going to happen yet. I could get a reprimand or a formal warning. I might even have to appear in court. Mum was in a state of shock when she turned up at the police station. She’s said she’ll stand by me but I know she feels let down.”



See **THE LAW** (pages 24-25) for more info on what could happen if you supply drugs to friends – even if you give them for free.

Buzz

It's the way you feel after taking a drug. It depends on what the drug is and how much you've taken. And it depends on how you are feeling, where you are taking it and who you're with. But you might...

1. Get high

Some drugs make you feel more alert and energetic.
= cocaine; crack; ecstasy; poppers; speed; tobacco

2. Calm down

Some drugs slow you down. They can make you feel calm and sleepy. = alcohol; cannabis; gases, glues and aerosols (also known as volatile substances); GHB; tranquillisers

3. Trip out

Some drugs affect your mind. They distort the way you see, hear,

feel and smell things.
= cannabis; ecstasy; ketamine; LSD; magic mushrooms

4. Get knocked out

Some drugs block out physical and emotional pain. = heroin

But if the high was the only thing that happened, wouldn't everyone be taking drugs?

See **COMEDOWN** (page 11) and check out the **LOWS** throughout this leaflet.

C

Cannabis ((

Looks like:

- > **hash** = blacky-brown lump made from resin
- > **grass or weed** = the dried, chopped leaves. Often called 'herbal'
- > **skunk** = a type of herbal cannabis. Can be 2-3 times stronger than other varieties

Usually mixed with tobacco and smoked as a spliff or joint. Can also be used to make tea or can be baked in 'hash cakes' and cookies.

Highs: Smoking a spliff makes a lot of people happy and relaxed and the effects can last a few hours. Some people have one puff and get the giggles. It can make

colours and sounds seem brighter and sharper.

Lows: Some people throw up, especially if they've been drinking. Some people get anxious or paranoid. Smoking it increases your chances of getting diseases like lung cancer and bronchitis.

Regular users have an increased risk of mental health problems, including schizophrenia. This could be worse if you smoke a lot, are young and smoke strong cannabis, like skunk. You shouldn't take cannabis at all if you've a history of mental health problems, depression or paranoia.



Long-term use may affect memory and concentration levels, which can hinder performance in school, college or work – in some cases causing people to give up or drop out. Cannabis has also been known to drain people of energy, leaving users tired and lazy and more likely to sit around than get on with things.



fact or fiction?

It's OK to smoke cannabis because it's natural.

fiction: Just because it's natural doesn't mean it won't harm you. See Lows above. And don't forget, cannabis is illegal.



Cash

Drugs cost. If you take pills every weekend, you could easily end up spending quite a chunk of cash in a year just on the drugs. A coke habit can cost up to £100 day. Stealing to pay for drugs can land you with a conviction.

“It was getting crazy. Each time I did it, I just wanted more. I was blowing all my cash on it – and always looking out for a chance to score. My girlfriend was getting fed up with me having no money so I decided I had to face up to what what drugs were costing me.”

And there are other costs too:

- > to your health (page 18)
- > to your safety (page 36)
- > to your goals (page 22)

Drugs can cost you even more. Check out THE LAW on pages 24-25.



Remember

The costs are not just financial. Socially and environmentally, drugs take their toll. Because drugs don't just affect the people who use them: they impact on the lives of people who become victims of drug-related crime, and on those who have to live with the mess that drug users leave behind. They also affect workers in other countries who grow the raw materials, and the people who are involved in smuggling and transportation.

Cocaine (Class A)

Looks like: A white powder. It's usually cut into lines on a smooth surface and snorted up the nose. Can also be smoked or made into a liquid and injected.

Highs: Makes you feel wide awake, cool and confident. It can give your ego a real boost, so you might end up thinking you're the world's greatest flirt, dancer or comedian (although usually you're not!).

Lows: Because cocaine is really addictive, a habit can be expensive. Snorting it can destroy the inside of your nose and high doses can stop you breathing. Even young people can have a fit or heart attack after taking too much and people have died from overdose. The hit is quite short-lived – 20-30 minutes – so people are often tempted to take more. After a big night on coke you might feel like you've got flu. Using it regularly can make you feel run-down, panicky and reduce your sex drive.





Comedown

With drugs like cocaine, speed and ecstasy the high is followed by a comedown where you might feel tired, depressed or physically low.

With ecstasy, the comedown following weekend clubbing can last a few days, and some clubbers call it “mid-week flu”. With crack cocaine the comedown is more of a crash and you might crave more of the drug. When they crash, some people can get irritable or aggressive.

Crack cocaine (Class A)

Looks like: Small lumps or rocks about the size of a raisin, made out of cocaine, baking powder and water. It's called crack because it makes a crackling sound when it's being burnt. Usually smoked in a pipe, glass tube, plastic bottle or in foil. Can also be injected.

Highs: Same short-lived effects as snorting cocaine, but much stronger and a more intense high.

Lows: Crack cocaine is extremely addictive and it's an expensive habit because the effects



wear off so quickly. It can cause hallucinations, mood swings and massive paranoia. High doses can raise your temperature and stop you breathing and, if you overdose, it can be fatal. Heavy users often get anxious and paranoid, have trouble sleeping and feel sick quite a lot.

Crystal Meth See page 30

D

Depression

Feeling a bit low or moody the day after – or sometimes even longer – is part of the deal with most drugs.

Sometimes it gets more serious. If things don't make sense any more and you want to curl up and hide, you probably need to talk to someone who can help, such as your GP.

“After a while I didn't feel like myself anymore. I didn't know where the old me had gone to.”

Sammi, 18

Drug-driving

You know that drink-driving is illegal. What you might not know is that drug-driving is illegal too.

You need co-ordination, anticipation, concentration and good judgement to drive safely. And all of these things can go out of the window if you're on drugs.

The police are using roadside tests to find out whether motorists are unfit to drive because of alcohol or drugs

E

Ecstasy (Class A)

Looks like: Pure ecstasy is a white crystal powder which scientists call 'MDMA'. Ecstasy sold on the street usually comes in tablets and is unlikely to be pure MDMA. It also comes in all sorts of colours and designs, and can sometimes be sold as powder.

Highs: You have loads of energy. Sounds, colours and emotions feel more intense – you might feel like you love everyone around you.

Lows: Ecstasy can cause anxiety, panic attacks and confusion. It raises your temperature and makes your heart beat faster. There have been over 200 reported ecstasy-related deaths in the UK since 1990. In some cases E stops the body producing urine, so if you drink too much liquid too quickly, it can interfere badly with your body's salt balance. You never know what you're getting with an E or how you'll react.



IRM (page 18)

in your **E?**

- the 'unknown'

(page 44)

F

FRANK

is here to give you friendly, confidential advice on any subject related to drugs:

- > what they are and what they do**
- > pressure from your mates**
- > looking after yourself**
- > what to do if things go wrong**
- > where to get help locally**

FRANK is available in 120 languages, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Calls are free from landlines and some mobiles. You can talk to FRANK confidentially:

- > on 0800 77 66 00**
- > by textphone (for the hard of hearing) 0800 917 8765**
- > by emailing frank@talktofrank.com**
- > by going to www.talktofrank.com and adding the FRANK Bot as a contact on your instant messenger**



G

Gases, Glues and Aerosols and other volatile substances

Looks like: Gas lighter refills, cans of hairspray, deodorants, air fresheners, tins or tubes of glue, nail varnish and petroleum products.

Highs: Makes you feel dizzy and a bit like being drunk. You lose your inhibitions.

Lows: Volatile substances can lead to coma and heart problems and can kill you instantly. People have died the first time they've used them. Squirting gas products into your mouth is particularly dangerous and deadly. It makes your throat swell so you can't breathe and makes your

heart slow down. It's important not to scare or chase someone who is high on glue as a sudden shock can be fatal.

They can seriously affect your judgment so you might try something stupid. At the very least, you could get a red rash around your mouth, be sick or pass out.

It is against the law for a shopkeeper to sell ANY product to someone under 18 if they suspect they might use it to get high.



GHB (Class C)

Looks like: A clear liquid with no smell, which tastes slightly salty. It comes in small bottles or capsules. A capful is a normal dose. Sometimes comes in powder form.

Highs: Can make you feel euphoric, sensual and uninhibited. Effects can last up to a whole day.

Lows: You might feel sick, you can get muscle tremors and you might lose consciousness. It can be fatal if it's mixed with alcohol or other drugs. Take too much and you'll start to feel sleepy and out of it. Because it's almost tasteless, it's easily slipped into a drink so it's sometimes used in sex attacks like rape. We don't know what the long-term effects of GHB are but you can become physically dependent on high doses.



H

Harm

Substances are not safe and can cause long-term harm. But, to reduce the amount of harm they can do, anyone who takes drugs should:

- > avoid mixing drugs
 - see **MIXING IT** (page 31) for more info
- > pace themselves – it can take a while for substances to kick in
- > take a break – if they're dancing, they should take regular breaks to cool down, drink water and check how they're feeling
- > keep hydrated (especially if taking ecstasy and speed while clubbing). It's best to sip fruit juice or isotonic sports drinks regularly (no more than a pint an hour)
- > keep track of the amount they're using
 - to avoid an overdose
- > stay with other people
 - especially if they start to feel ill
- > take it easy the morning after – to help their body recover. That means simple, healthy stuff like water, toast and orange juice

Haylee, 17

"The first time I took coke I was at a party and up for a good time. I felt like I was IT after I'd done it. After a while, coke was ruling my social life. But the highs weren't as good as they used to be, so when someone suggested crack I decided to try it. Before long, that was what I'd choose if I could get my hands on it. The only thing was, I always felt really ill afterwards. One night, a couple of guys I was with were smoking heroin to get through the crash.



They said I should take some. I'd always seen myself as someone who took drugs to have a laugh. This made me realise I was in too deep. Getting into heroin was never part of the plan."

Heroin (Class A)

Looks like: Pure heroin is white and is rarely seen on the streets. The street heroin you are more likely to come across can vary in colour from dark brown to yellowish off-white. It can be smoked, snorted or dissolved in water and injected or heated and inhaled (called 'chasing the dragon').

Highs: Heroin slows your body down and stops pain. Most people get a big rush or buzz a few minutes after taking it, which makes them feel good about themselves.

Lows: Heroin is very addictive and your body gets used to it very quickly so you have to take more and more just to feel 'normal' and avoid severe withdrawals. You can get sleepy, dizzy or vomit; large doses can put you in a coma or even kill you, especially if taken with alcohol. If you take it with other drugs – including alcohol – you are more likely to overdose.

See page 22 for info on **INJECTING**

Also see **UNCONSCIOUS** (page 42)

STAMP
HERE

Holidays

Wish you were here?

Weather is hot – so there's more chance of getting dehydrated if you're taking ecstasy or speed. Putting alcohol into the mix can make things even worse.

Loads to do – but don't get so off your head you can't find your way back to your hotel or end up doing something you regret.

New experiences – different food, scenery, clubs and people. Is it wise to experiment with something like drugs when you're in an

unfamiliar place? And that's without the risks you face if you get caught (see below).

Friendly locals – and you'll be treated like a local if you get caught with drugs. Some countries have much stricter laws than in the UK – there's a death sentence for some drug offences in Thailand, Malaysia, Singapore, Indonesia, Iran and Algeria. Some countries will not let you in in the first place if you have a drug conviction.

雲海と富士

I



Injecting

Cocaine, crack cocaine, heroin and speed are sometimes injected.

It takes the drug straight into the bloodstream so it gives people a quicker, bigger high.

But it can cause vein damage, ulcers and gangrene and spread HIV and viral hepatitis. Injecting a 'speedball' – cocaine and heroin – can be deadly.

J

Jobs

Drugs can make a job – or school or college – really hard work.

They can mess up the way you act, how well you can focus, what you remember and how you deal with people. And a drug conviction might stop you getting your dream job.

K

Ketamine (Class C)

Looks like: Usually comes as a grainy white powder which is snorted or bought as a tablet.

Highs: Ketamine makes you hallucinate. You can trip for up to 3 hours (depending on the dose) and you might have an 'out of body' experience.



Lows: It's an anaesthetic and stops you feeling pain, so you're in danger of injuring yourself badly without knowing you've done it. Sometimes people are physically incapable of moving.

It can cause panic attacks, depression and, in large doses, can make mental health problems like schizophrenia worse. Large doses can make it difficult to breathe and can cause heart failure. If you're sick, there's a risk you could choke on your vomit.

See **SAFETY** (page 36)

L

The law

There are two offences police can charge you with if you are caught with drugs:

Possession

If you are caught with drugs the police will always take action, even if it's only a small amount. What happens depends on the circumstances.

You might get a warning and have the drug confiscated or, if it's more serious, you will be arrested.

The police will think it's more serious if:

- > you've been caught with Class A drugs
- > this isn't the first time you've been caught

Dealing

Dealing is much more serious and includes being caught with drugs that you were going to share with your mates.

A drug dealer could end up in jail for a long time (see maximum penalties overleaf).

The three Classes of illegal drugs

Illegal drugs are put into three categories: Class A, B and C. Class A are the most harmful and have the biggest penalties.

DRUG

MAXIMUM PENALTIES

Class A – cocaine, crack cocaine, crystal meth, ecstasy, heroin, LSD and magic mushrooms

carries the heaviest penalties, including up to seven years in jail for possession and life imprisonment for supply

Class B – cannabis, speed (Class A if prepared for injection)

up to five years in jail for possession and 14 years for supply

Class C – anabolic steroids, ketamine, illegal possession of prescription drugs like tranquillisers

up to two years in jail for possession and 14 years for supply

A criminal record could affect your chances of getting a job or going on holiday abroad.

Remember – drug-driving is as illegal as drink-driving and carries the same penalties.

Looks

One E or a few spliffs will make you look a bit out of it. But long-term drug use can affect your appearance including your skin, hair and weight. And your personal hygiene might end up taking a back seat too.



“I couldn’t bear to look in the mirror any more – I looked really old, my skin was pasty and spotty, my eyes were black and I hadn’t even bothered to keep my clothes clean.” Stacey, 17

LSD (Class A)

Looks like: Tiny squares of paper called 'tabs', usually with pictures on them.

Highs: A trip makes you hallucinate (see or hear things that aren't there) and feeds off your imagination for up to 12 hours. Colours and sounds can be more intense, and objects, time and movement are often distorted.

Lows: If you panic on a trip it can be scary and confusing. A bad trip can be your worst nightmare come to life – you could harm yourself while having a bad trip and you might also get flashbacks days or months after the event.



There's no evidence to suggest LSD does any long-term physical damage, but if you have mental health problems, it can make them worse. If you have a history of serious mental health problems in your family, it can be a bad idea to take LSD as it can bring underlying problems to the surface.

M

Magic mushrooms (Class A)

Looks like: Raw or dried mushrooms. The most common is the Liberty Cap which is small and tan coloured.

Highs: Like LSD, but the trip is often milder and shorter and typically lasts about 4 hours. People feel giggly and confident. Taking lots of mushrooms can distort colour, sound, objects, time and movement.

Lows: Mushrooms make some people dizzy, sick or have diarrhoea. They can make you hallucinate (which means you could see or hear things that aren't really there) and this can be frightening.

You could get flashbacks where you re-live part of the trip and, as with LSD, bad trips can be terrifying. If you have a mental health problem, magic mushrooms might complicate it. And there's always the risk of taking a poisonous mushroom by mistake as they look quite similar.





Mates

Got a mate taking drugs?

Is it doing your head in as well as theirs? You could try talking to them. Check out the tips below:

1. Decide what you want to say before you begin. What do you think the problem is and what do you want them to do?

2. Pick your moment. Talk to them when you're calm and when they are not high.

3. Avoid asking 'why?' Instead, ask questions that start with how, when, what or where.

4. Focus on them, not the drugs. The drugs aren't doing anything to you – your mate is. You need to explain how their behaviour affects you. Are they unreliable? Moody? Broke?

5. Listen to them. If they go for help, offer to go with them.

At the end of the day, if you can't accept their choices, you need to decide whether you want to carry on being mates.

If they need help (or you need help to deal with them), FRANK can help. Call **0800 77 66 00** or log on to **talktofrank.com**



Methadone

Methadone is a manufactured drug that has similar effects to heroin, although it doesn't give

the same degree of high. It is used as a substitute for heroin in the treatment of heroin addiction.

Methamphetamine (Class A) aka Methylamphetamine – Crystal Meth

Looks like: It's a type of amphetamine that comes as a tablet, powder or crystals.

Highs: Gives a very intense rush similar to crack cocaine but lasting between 4 and 12 hours. It suppresses the appetite and keeps you awake.

Lows: Crystal meth is very addictive and people often end up bingeing on it. It can cause mental health problems and

affect your appearance big time. Your teeth and gums could rot away (known as 'meth mouth') and you could get nausea, vomiting and diarrhoea. Some people get skin ulcers through picking at bugs they imagine are crawling under their skin. While on the drug, users often indulge in risky sexual behaviour.





Mixing it

All drugs carry risks. But mixing them can make things a lot more dangerous.

tranquillisers + alcohol

'Downer' drugs like this slow down your heart rate and breathing. Combining the two can make the effect even stronger.

heroin + tranquillisers or alcohol

Overdose is much more likely when these drugs are combined.

heroin + cocaine

Known as a 'speedball', this can be deadly.

cocaine + alcohol

Produces a highly toxic substance in the body called cocaethylene which affects your heart and stays in your system longer than cocaine alone.

stimulants (like cocaine and speed) + alcohol

These both put pressure on the heart, increasing the risk of heart attack.

stimulants + stimulants

Sometimes the effects don't kick in straight away so people take something else. This can give an unpleasant effect and can put a serious strain on the heart.

ecstasy + cannabis

Sometimes people take cannabis to take the edge off an ecstasy trip. But instead of calming you down, it could make you anxious and paranoid.

N

Nick, 16

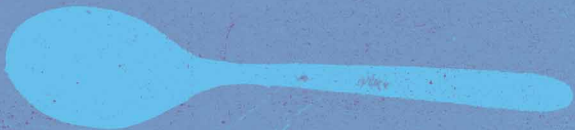


had but they were all off their heads. His brother rolled a spliff and it started doing the rounds. Paul took a puff and passed it to me. I'd never done cannabis before so I tried it – I didn't want my mates to think I couldn't handle it."

"We'd been hanging out, having a few drinks and then went back to my friend Paul's house. His brother and a couple of other mates had been clubbing and had all taken some Es. I don't know what else they'd

Not sure what to say if your mates are taking drugs? Check out **MATES** on page 29.

O



Overdose

There's no such thing as a safe amount to take. But an overdose is when you take so much your body can't cope. If this happens you'll need urgent medical attention.

With some drugs like cocaine and heroin, your tolerance can build up very quickly, so you need more and more to get the same high. And, after a break, your tolerance goes down. It's easy to take too much.

P

Panic

When someone's on ecstasy, LSD, mushrooms or speed there's a risk they might panic.

So how do you deal with it?

- > calm them down and be reassuring
- > steer them clear of crowds, noisy music and bright lights
- > tell them to take long slow breaths
- > if someone's high (especially on volatile substances), don't scare them - it could kill them

Poppers

Looks like: Poppers come in small bottles filled with liquid chemicals called alkyl nitrites. They are sold in sex shops, clubs and gay bars.

Highs: You get a head rush that lasts a couple of minutes. Sniffing poppers during sex can make sexual organs feel bigger and orgasms last longer.

Lows: The effects don't last long and can leave people feeling sick, faint and weak. They can give you a severe headache, or a rash around your nose and mouth. They can burn your skin if you spill them or kill you if you swallow them. Taking poppers is a bad idea for anyone with chest or heart problems, or if you are anaemic or have glaucoma (an eye disorder). Some men say they have trouble getting an erection after sniffing poppers. Poppers are not addictive but they are toxic. Using Viagra and poppers together can affect your heart.



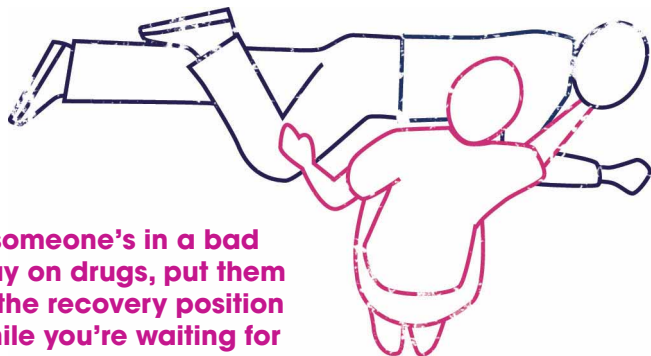
Q

Questions?

Don't keep them bottled up. FRANK can give you friendly, confidential help and advice on **0800 77 66 00**. FRANK is available 24 hours a day or by email **frank@talktofrank.com**

R

Recovery position



If someone's in a bad way on drugs, put them in the recovery position while you're waiting for help to arrive.

Risks

No drug is completely safe. There are lots of different risks:

- > **HARM** – see page 18
- > **SAFETY** – see below
- > **LOWS** – these are different for each drug.

See their individual pages for more info.

S

Safety

Your safety is at risk when you are on drugs:

- > **being reckless** – some drugs can make you feel invincible, putting yourself or others at risk of injury.
- > **making bad decisions** – some drugs can cloud your judgement so you might do something you regret.
- > **being attacked** – make sure your drinks aren't tampered with so you're not at risk of drug-assisted sexual assault.
- > **getting in with the wrong crowd** – you might end up getting involved in crime.





Sex

Some drugs make you less choosy

Volatile substances (which include gases, glues and aerosols), GHB and alcohol make you less inhibited, so you might pull someone you wouldn't usually look twice at.

Some drugs let you down

Alcohol, tranquillisers and heroin can turn a big night of passion into a big night of nothing. Regular heroin users can lose their sex drive altogether. You could end up taking more risks and do things you wouldn't normally do, or forget to use a condom.

Some drugs can be deceptive

Lots of people think cocaine, speed and ecstasy are good for sex. They might make you feel horny, but you might not be able to follow through.

Some are bad news

GHB and rohypnol are sometimes used in sexual assault – they're slipped into drinks to help knock people out.

“At the time I thought ‘phwoar’ and couldn’t believe my luck. But by four in the morning I was starting to think straighter. I definitely wouldn’t have taken it that far if I hadn’t been so out of it.” Jamal, 17




Skunk (Class B)

Skunk is a very strong form of cannabis that is produced using special breeding techniques. It can be 2 – 3 times stronger than hash. It's called skunk because of its powerful smell and it has a much stronger effect than hash or traditional herbal cannabis. It has become more common in recent years than the less potent forms of cannabis.

You need to watch out for skunk, as it contains much more THC (the stuff that gets you high) than ordinary cannabis. So be aware: skunk can really mess you up.

Mental health

If you smoke cannabis regularly, you have an increased risk of developing serious mental health problems, including schizophrenia. Smoking skunk might increase these risks even more. You just don't know how it will affect your mental health in the future.



Speed (Class B)

(but Class A if prepared for injection)

Looks like: Usually sold in wraps like cocaine. The powder is off-white or pink and sometimes looks like small crystals. Base speed is pinky-grey and feels like putty. Speed is dabbed on the gums or sniffed in lines. It can also be rolled up in cigarette paper and swallowed (a 'speedbomb'), mixed in drinks or injected.

Highs: Speed makes you feel wide awake, excited, chatty and full of energy and stops you feeling hungry. It can cause hallucinations if you sniff a lot in a short space of time.

Lows: Speed puts a strain on your heart and taking it with anti-depressants or

alcohol can be fatal. It can make you anxious, low, irritable or aggressive and too much sniffing of it can damage your nose. If you use it a lot, you could get more colds, flu and sore throats. Injecting carries the usual risks associated with needle use. The high is followed by a long, slow comedown which makes you feel irritable and can last for one or two days.

“When I decided to take speed my mates told me what to expect. But I checked things out myself and what they’d said was only half the story.” Dan, 16

T

Tobacco

Looks like: A brown, flaky mixture of dried and rubbed leaves of the tobacco plant, which is smoked or chewed. Sometimes cannabis is added to make a 'spliff' or joint.

Highs: Regular smokers say it helps them relax and feel less hungry.

Lows: Nicotine is a highly addictive drug. It speeds up the heart rate and increases your blood pressure. Smokers get hooked very quickly and it can take years and a huge effort to kick the habit. (For friendly

advice on giving up, call the NHS smokefree line on 0800 022 4332). Long-term addiction can lead to cancer and serious lung and heart problems. Smoking has been linked to 2,000 amputations and 106,000 premature deaths a year in the UK.

Smoking when pregnant can put your baby at risk.

From 1 October 2007 it became illegal for someone to sell you cigarettes and tobacco products if you are under 18.



Tranquillisers (Class C)

Looks like: Tranquillisers are prescribed by doctors to treat anxiety and insomnia. They can come as tablets, capsules, injections and suppositories (tablets you put up your bum).

Highs: Tranquillisers calm people down. Some people have them on prescription. They make you feel more relaxed and less anxious but big doses can make you sleepy and forgetful. They're often used as chill-out drugs on the club scene.

Lows: Some cause short-term memory loss. If you take tranquillisers with other 'downer' drugs

like alcohol you might accidentally overdose. Injecting crushed tablets or melted-down capsules can block veins and may kill you. You can become dependent quite quickly – some people get addicted after using them for just four weeks – and withdrawal can cause pounding headaches, sickness and confusion.



U

Unconscious

If someone's gone overboard with alcohol, volatile substances, heroin or poppers, there's a risk they might lose consciousness. Call 999 immediately and place them in the **RECOVERY POSITION** (see page 35).

V

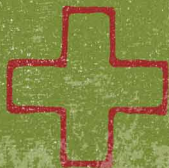
Vicky, 18

"We were celebrating Becky's birthday and ended up at a club. We'd all been so into the music and dancing that, at first, we didn't notice that Danni was missing. We found her slumped on a sofa – completely out of it and not breathing properly.



We got someone from the club to help. While we were waiting for the ambulance, they gave her mouth-to-mouth and put her on her side so she wouldn't choke if she was sick. She's OK now but we were so lucky we found someone who knew what to do."

W



Warning signs

If you or your mates take drugs regularly or over a long period, look out for signs that suggest the drug use is becoming a problem. Such as:

- > **losing interest** in things you used to enjoy
- > **things** not going so well at home
- > **not being able to concentrate**
- > skipping school, college or work
- > **not caring** how you look
- > feeling **depressed**
- > feeling jittery
- > becoming a drug **bore**
- > **losing touch** with your true friends
- > only going out somewhere if there's a **chance you will score** drugs

X

X – ‘the unknown’

There's always an element of the unknown with drugs.

What's in it:

- > with cocaine you might get a wrap padded out with sugar or talcum powder
- > you won't know for sure what an E's got in it. It's often mixed with caffeine, speed or other chemicals
- > most heroin bought on the street is impure. Some people have overdosed on pure heroin because their body is only used to an impure dose
- > batches of skunk have been found that contain very tiny glass beads which you can't see. Inhaling hot glass is not a good idea

How you react to it:

- > lots of drugs affect the heart and body temperature. The way that your body 'takes the strain' will affect how you are feeling

What happens that night:

- > if you're on LSD and you're not in a good mood or something strange happens, the trip could turn into a nightmare

Y

Your life, your future

It's up to you to set your own limits when it comes to drinking and drugs. Take it easy and make sure you know what the risks are. And don't be persuaded by other people to do things you're not sure about. But remember, most people don't do drugs. It's your life - shouldn't you be in control?

Y

ZZZZZZZZZZ

Zoned out..zonked...zombie...

Drugs might make you high. But they can also make you tired...and boring...and help you achieve a big fat zero.

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