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2. Methamphetamine

Methamphetamine

Generic name: methamphetamine [*METH-am-FET-a-meen*]

Brand names: [Desoxyn](#), Desoxyn Gradumet

Drug classes: [Anorexiants](#), [CNS stimulants](#)

Medically reviewed by [Sophia Entringer, PharmD](#). Last updated on Aug 14, 2023.

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What is methamphetamine?

[Methamphetamine](#) is a central nervous system stimulant. It affects chemicals in the brain and nerves that contribute to hyperactivity and impulse control.

Methamphetamine is used to treat [attention deficit hyperactivity disorder \(ADHD\)](#).

Methamphetamine is also to treat [obesity](#) in people who have not lost weight with diets or other treatments.

Methamphetamine may also be used for other indications not listed in this guide.

Warnings

You should not use methamphetamine if you have [glaucoma](#), overactive thyroid, severe agitation, moderate to severe high blood pressure, heart disease or coronary artery disease, or a history of drug abuse.

Methamphetamine may be habit-forming, and this medicine is a [drug of abuse](#). **Tell your doctor if you have had problems with drug or alcohol abuse.**

Stimulants have caused stroke, heart attack, and sudden death in people with high blood pressure, heart disease, or a heart defect.

Do not use methamphetamine if you have used an MAO inhibitor in the past 14 days, such as isocarboxazid, linezolid, methylene blue injection, phenelzine, rasagiline, selegiline, or tranylcypromine.

Methamphetamine may cause new or worsening psychosis (unusual thoughts or behavior), especially if you have a history of depression, mental illness, or bipolar disorder.

You may have blood circulation problems that can cause numbness, pain, or discoloration in your fingers or toes.

Call your doctor right away if you have: **signs of heart problems** - chest pain, feeling light-headed or short of breath; **signs of psychosis** - paranoia, aggression, new behavior problems, seeing or hearing things that are not real; **signs of circulation problems** - unexplained wounds on your fingers or toes.

Before taking this medicine

You should not use methamphetamine if you are allergic to any stimulant medicine, or if you have:

- moderate to severe high blood pressure;
- heart disease or coronary artery disease (hardened arteries);
- overactive thyroid;
- glaucoma;
- severe anxiety, tension, or agitation (stimulant medicine can make these symptoms worse); or
- a history of drug or alcohol addiction.

Do not use methamphetamine if you have used an MAO inhibitor in the past 14 days. A dangerous drug interaction could occur. MAO inhibitors include isocarboxazid, linezolid, methylene blue injection, phenelzine, rasagiline, selegiline, tranylcypromine, and others.

Some medicines can interact with methamphetamine and cause a serious condition called **serotonin syndrome**. Be sure your doctor knows if you also take opioid medicine, herbal products, or medicine for depression, mental illness, Parkinson's disease, migraine headaches, serious infections, or prevention of nausea and vomiting. **Ask your doctor before making any changes in how or when you take your medications.**

Stimulants have caused stroke, heart attack, and sudden death in certain people. Tell your doctor if you have:

- heart problems or a congenital heart defect;
- high blood pressure; or
- a family history of heart disease or sudden death.

To make sure this medicine is safe for you, tell your doctor if you or anyone in your family has ever had:

- depression, mental illness, bipolar disorder, psychosis, or suicidal thoughts or actions;
- motor tics (muscle twitches) or Tourette's syndrome;
- seizures or epilepsy;
- an abnormal brain wave test (EEG);
- diabetes; or
- blood circulation problems in the hands or feet.

When used to treat obesity, methamphetamine should be used only after other diets or medications have been tried without successful weight loss.

Taking this medicine during pregnancy can cause premature birth, low birth weight, or withdrawal symptoms in the newborn baby. Tell your doctor if you are pregnant or plan to become pregnant.

Methamphetamine can pass into breast milk and may harm a nursing baby. You should not breast-feed while using this medicine.

Methamphetamine is not FDA-approved for use by anyone younger than 6 years old and it is not approved to treat obesity in a child younger than 12 years old.

 [Methamphetamine pregnancy and breastfeeding warnings](#) (more detail)

How should I take methamphetamine?

Take methamphetamine exactly as it was prescribed for you. Follow all directions on your prescription label. Your doctor may occasionally change your dose. Do not use this medicine in larger or smaller amounts or for longer than recommended.

Methamphetamine may be habit-forming. **Never share this medicine with another person, especially someone with a history of drug abuse or addiction.** Keep the medication in a place where others cannot get to it. Selling or giving away this medicine is against the law.

Read all patient information, medication guides, and instruction sheets provided to you. Ask your doctor or pharmacist if you have any questions.

If you are taking methamphetamine to treat obesity and your appetite gradually increases, do not increase your dose. Stop taking the medicine and call your doctor.

While using this medicine, your doctor will need to check your progress at regular visits. Tell any doctor who treats you that you are using this medicine.

Store at room temperature away from moisture, heat, and light.

Keep track of your medicine. Methamphetamine is a drug of abuse and you should be aware if anyone is using your medicine improperly or without a prescription.

What happens if I miss a dose?

Take the missed dose as soon as you remember, but not late in the day. Skip the missed dose if it is almost evening. Do not take extra medicine to make up the missed dose.

What happens if I overdose?

Seek emergency medical attention or call the Poison Help line at 1-800-222-1222. **An overdose of methamphetamine can be fatal.**

Overdose symptoms may include restlessness, tremor, muscle twitches, rapid breathing, hostility, violence, panic, muscle pain or weakness, and dark colored urine. These symptoms may be followed by depression and tiredness. Overdose may also cause seizure or coma.

What to avoid

This medication may impair your thinking or reactions. Be careful if you drive or do anything that requires you to be alert.

Avoid drinking fruit juices or taking vitamin C at the same time you take methamphetamine. These can make your body

absorb less of the medicine.

Methamphetamine side effects

Get emergency medical help if you have **signs of an allergic reaction to methamphetamine**: hives; difficult breathing; swelling of your face, lips, tongue, or throat.

Call your doctor at once if you have:

- **signs of heart problems** - chest pain, trouble breathing, feeling like you might pass out;
- **signs of psychosis** - hallucinations (seeing or hearing things that are not real), new behavior problems, aggression, hostility, paranoia;
- **signs of circulation problems** - numbness, pain, cold feeling, unexplained wounds, or skin color changes (pale, red, or blue appearance) in your fingers or toes;
- a seizure (convulsions);
- muscle twitches (tics); or
- changes in your vision.

Seek medical attention right away if you have symptoms of serotonin syndrome, such as: agitation, hallucinations, fever, sweating, shivering, fast heart rate, muscle stiffness, twitching, loss of coordination, nausea, vomiting, or diarrhea.

Methamphetamine can affect growth in children. Tell your doctor if your child is not growing at a normal rate while using this medicine.

Common methamphetamine side effects may include:

- headache or dizziness;
- fast heartbeats;
- sleep problems (insomnia);
- diarrhea, constipation, upset stomach;
- tremors; or
- loss of appetite, weight loss.

This is not a complete list of side effects and others may occur. Call your doctor for medical advice about side effects. You may report side effects to FDA at 1-800-FDA-1088.

 [Methamphetamine side effects](#) (more detail)

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Dosing information

Usual Adult Dose for Obesity:

5 mg orally 30 minutes before each meal

Duration of Therapy: Should not exceed a few weeks

Use: Short-term adjunct in a weight reduction regimen based on caloric restriction; for patients in whom obesity is refractory to alternative therapy (e.g., repeated diets, group programs, other drugs).

Usual Pediatric Dose for Attention Deficit Disorder:

Age 6 Years and Older:

-Initial dose: 5 mg orally once or twice a day

-Maintenance dose: Daily dosage may be raised in increments of 5 mg at weekly intervals until an optimum clinical response is achieved; the usual effective dose is 20 to 25 mg per day.

Comments:

-The total daily dose may be given in 2 divided doses.

-Where possible, drug administration should be interrupted occasionally to determine if there is a recurrence of behavioral symptoms sufficient to require continued therapy.

Use: As part of a total treatment program for Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), a behavioral syndrome characterized by moderate to severe distractibility, short attention span, hyperactivity, emotional lability, and impulsivity.

Usual Pediatric Dose for Obesity:

Age 12 Years and Older:

5 mg orally 30 minutes before each meal

Duration of Therapy: Should not exceed a few weeks

Use: Short-term adjunct in a weight reduction regimen based on caloric restriction; for patients in whom obesity is refractory to alternative therapy (e.g., repeated diets, group programs, other drugs).

 [Detailed Methamphetamine dosage information](#)

What other drugs will affect methamphetamine?

Ask your doctor before using a stomach acid medicine (including Alka-Seltzer or sodium bicarbonate). Some of these medicines can change the way your body eliminates methamphetamine, and may increase side effects.

Tell your doctor about all your current medicines and any you start or stop using, especially:

- medication to treat depression or mental illness;
- insulin;
- blood pressure medicine; or
- seizure medicine.

This list is not complete. Other drugs may interact with methamphetamine, including prescription and over-the-counter medicines, vitamins, and herbal products. Not all possible interactions are listed in this medication guide.

 [Methamphetamine drug interactions](#) (more detail)

Does methamphetamine interact with my other drugs?

Enter medications to view a detailed interaction report using our [Drug Interaction Checker](#).

+

Add

Frequently asked questions

- [What medications can cause a false positive for methamphetamines?](#)

References

1. [Methamphetamine Product Label](#)

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Patient resources

Other brands

[Desoxyn](#)

Professional resources

- [Methamphetamine monograph](#)
- [Methamphetamine \(FDA\)](#)

Other brands

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Related treatment guides

- [Weight Loss \(Obesity/Overweight\)](#)
- [ADHD](#)

Further information

Remember, keep this and all other medicines out of the reach of children, never share your medicines with others, and use methamphetamine only for the indication prescribed.

Always consult your healthcare provider to ensure the information displayed on this page applies to your personal circumstances.

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Guide to Weight Loss Drugs

Find out everything you need to know about weight loss drugs in our prescription [weight loss drug guide](#).

DRUG STATUS

Availability

Rx Prescription only


Pregnancy & Lactation

 Risk data available

CSA Schedule*

2 High potential for abuse

Approval History

 Drug history at FDA



User Reviews & Ratings

8.9 / 10

[77 Reviews](#)

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