

Ecstasy

Ecstasy is the street name for methylene-dioxymethamphetamine (MDMA), a chemical substance that combines methamphetamine with a substance containing hallucinogenic properties. Ecstasy is both a stimulant and a hallucinogen, and its effects are potentially life-threatening. Ecstasy is also known as X-TC, Adam, Christy, and Lover's Speed. Among the variations of the drug is a new substance, Herbal Ecstasy, that is composed of ephedrine (ma huang) or pseudoephedrine and caffeine from the kola nut. Herbal Ecstasy is known as Cloud 9, Herbal Bliss, Ritual Spirit, Herbal X, GWM, Rave Energy, Ultimate Xphoria, and X.

Ecstasy is considered a club drug, and like all other club drugs, is a combination of other illicit drugs. Because many different recipes are used to make Ecstasy, there is a greater risk of death and permanent brain damage. It is available in tablet, capsule, or powder form and some manufacturers package it in capsules or generic tablets to make it look like prescription drugs. The average cost is between \$7 and \$30 per pill.

Though an Ecstasy high can last from 6 to 24 hours, the average "trip" lasts about three to four hours. The drug can be detected in urine for up to four days after last use. In moderate doses, Ecstasy can cause euphoria, feelings of well-being, feelings of enhanced mental or emotional clarity, anxiety, and paranoia, which can occur for weeks after it is taken. Heavier doses can cause hallucinations, sensations of lightness and floating, depression, paranoid thinking, and violent, irrational behavior.

Physical reactions can include the following: loss of appetite, nausea, vomiting, blurred vision, increased heart rate and blood pressure, muscle tension, faintness, chills, sweating, tremors, reduced appetite, insomnia, convulsions, loss of control over voluntary body movements, kidney failure, heart attack, stroke, seizure, and increase body temperature. Some reactions have been reported to persist from one to fourteen days after taking Ecstasy. Individuals who are pregnant, have a heart condition, are epileptic, or have high blood pressure are at high risk of life-threatening reactions. In addition, users are at higher risk of heat exhaustion and dehydration with physical activity, especially when taken in a dance-party setting. A number of deaths have occurred because users don't drink enough water and become overheated. Long-term or permanent damage may affect the parts of the brain that are critical to thought, memory, and pleasure.