

Hallucinogens

Hallucinogens are drugs that distort one's perceptions, sensations, thinking, self-awareness and emotions. The most well-known hallucinogens include PCP, LSD, mescaline and peyote. Other more common names for these drugs are angel dust, acid and shrooms.

PCP is a white crystalline powder that is highly soluble in water and alcohol. It is available in a powder, tablet, capsule or liquid. PCP is commonly applied to a leafy material such as parsley, oregano, mint or marijuana and smoked.

LSD is usually sold in the form of small tablets, in thin squares of gelatin or on stamp sized pieces of paper. Always taken orally, tolerance to PCP develops rapidly.

Mescaline is a natural hallucinogen that is derived from the fleshy parts or buttons of the peyote cactus which is smoked or taken orally.

These drugs cause unpredictable reactions including erratic behavior and violence. Users hallucinating on these drugs can have a bad experience, or "trip", and cause harm to themselves or others. These "trips" can cause psychological scars and the user can experience flashbacks where the "trip" is relived months or even years later, long after the drug use has ended.

Hallucinogens cause increased heart rate and blood pressure, sleep disorders, tremors, incoherent speech, loss of coordination, loss of awareness of pain, nausea, vomiting, high fever, convulsions, coma, and heart and lung failure.

Users of hallucinogens report seeing, and even hearing, colors and shapes and having a distorted perception of distance and time during a "trip". Afterward, they often feel estranged from others, depressed, anxious and paranoid. Numerous accidental drowning, leaps from high places, vehicular accidents, suicides, homicides and self-mutilations have occurred because of the unpredictable psychological effects of this drug.

Since hallucinogens interfere with thought and concentration, activities such as driving a vehicle or operating machinery can be especially hazardous. Hallucinogens produce visual, auditory and tactile distortions. Poor judgment, slower reflexes, poor coordination, distraction and drowsiness can all occur when an individual is under the influence of hallucinogens.