

WHAT IS COCAINE?

Cocaine is an illicit substance derived from the Coca plant that is classified as a psychostimulant drug. Psychostimulant drugs speed up the messages travelling between the brain and affected parts of the body. Cocaine is popularly used on social occasions, which results in bingeing (repeated use at increasingly higher doses).

Long-term abuse of Cocaine can result in the user experiencing a wide range of serious mental and physical health conditions, and is extremely addictive.

HOW COCAINE IS USED AND HOW TO IDENTIFY IT?

Users of Cocaine can be classed as Occasional, Binge, or Regular Users. With these different classifications comes different use patterns, different administration methods, and use of different variants of the drug:

Cocaine Hydrochloride is a white/off-white coloured powder, and the most commonly found variant of the drug – it is usually sniffed through the nose (snorting), mixed as a drink, or dissolved in water and injected.

Crack Cocaine is created by removing the Hydrochloride through a chemical. Crack Cocaine is also commonly referred to as 'Free Base' Cocaine – 'free base' is predominantly smoked or dissolved and injected.



ABOUT APAC DIAGNOSTIC

APAC Diagnostic sponsors the No Drugs at Work campaign and also offers fully customisable drug testing solutions for your workplace. Please contact our team on +61 2 9986 2252 or via email and we will be pleased to help you in working to create a safe and drug free workplace.

AVAILABILITY

Of the respondents who took part in the 2020 IDRS Interviews, one in ten reported recent GHB use within the previous 6 months. Users reported the fast action, low cost, ease of use, and ease of secretion as key factors in their choice to use the drug.

Over the last decade the number of GHB detections at the border increased 8,900 per cent, from 1 in 2009–10 to 90 in 2018/19. Over the same period, GBL detections increased from 44 to 445 (a 911 per cent rise). (4)

In 2020, the main approach for arranging the purchase of any illicit or non-prescribed drugs by participants of the Drugs Reporting System (EDRS) in the previous 12 months was via social networking applications (such as Facebook, WhatsApp, Snapchat, Grindr, Tinder) (75%), followed by face-to-face (67%). (5)

QUICK FACTS ABOUT USAGE

- In 2019, the most common illicit drugs used in the previous 12 months was cannabis (11.6%), followed by cocaine (4.2%) and ecstasy (3.0%). Between 2016 and 2019 the percentage of people who had used Cocaine increased by 1.7% (from 2.5% to 4.2%).
- At 11.4%, Cocaine ranks third in popularity on the list of drugs that make up the illicit drug use burden. The median age of people who used cocaine was 25 years of age in 2001. This rose to 28 years of age in 2019
- Cocaine use among people in their 20s was at its highest level in 2019. Much of the rise in cocaine use among people in this age group occurred between 2016 and 2019—from 4.3% in 2001 to 6.9% in 2016 and up to 12.0% in 2019.
- "Employed people were more likely than unemployed people to use cocaine in the last 12 months (6.2% compared with 3.7%)".

COMMON STREET NAMES

Coke, blow, flake, candy, nose candy, Pepsi, coca puffs, "C", Charlie, toot, gold dust, AKA, Vitamin C, snow, girl, glass, the real thing, white lady, o.k., okey doke

BUSINESS RISKS

Whilst under the influence of Cocaine, many of the symptoms associated with the drugs consumption are likely to cause hazardous behaviours in the user. These actions may not only affect the user personally, but also; the safety of co-workers, a greater risk of damage to plant and equipment, and in the event of an accident, ongoing commercial impacts such as increased insurance premiums, costs associated with injury management, and the potential for costly legal action.

SYMPTOMS OF WITHDRAWAL

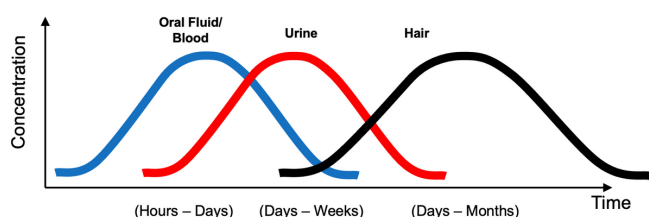
The most commonly observed symptoms of Cocaine withdrawal are:

- A profound sense of unease or dissatisfaction with life
- Agitation
- Anxiety
- Fatigue and depression
- Difficulty sleeping, followed by “crashing” or prolonged periods of deep sleep.
- An insatiable craving for more Cocaine

DETECTION WINDOW

A Drug Detection Window is the period of time after a drug's ingestion by a user during which a drug or its metabolites remain present in the user's system and can be detected through various drug testing protocols. For Benzodiazepines, the periods of time are:

- Urine: 1 to 3 days
- Saliva: 1 day
- Hair: Up to 3 months
- Sweat: 1 to 4 days
- Blood: 2 days



SIGNS OF USE

- Increased energy, talkativeness and overt displays of exhilaration and euphoria
- Increased sex drive and lower inhibitions
- Overconfidence and risk-taking. The user may feel stronger, smarter, or invincible, and feels little pain or fatigue.
- Restlessness and problems sleeping
- Jaw clenching and teeth grinding
- Loss of appetite
- Increased heart rate and blood pressure after an initial reduction in both

SIGNS OF OVERDOSE

- Irrational behaviour
- Agitation and hostility
- Paranoid delusions and hallucinations
- Fever and fits
- Unconsciousness
- Nausea and/or vomiting.
- Anxiety
- Chest pains
- Tremors
- Breathing difficulties

WHAT TO DO IN THE EVENT OF AN OVERDOSE

If someone looks like they are in trouble and there is a suspicion that they may have been using drugs, it's very important that they get medical help quickly. A quick response can save their life.

- Call an ambulance by dialling triple zero (000). Ambulance officers are not required to involve the police unless they feel in danger.
- Stay with the person until the ambulance arrives. Find out if anyone at the scene knows CPR in case the person stops breathing.
- Ensure the person has enough air by keeping crowds back and opening windows or taking them outside. Loosen tight clothing.
- If the person is unconscious or wants to lie down, put them in the recovery position. This involves gently rolling them onto their side and slightly tilting their head back. This stops them choking if they vomit and allows them to breath easily.
- Provide ambulance officers with as much information as you can, such as how much of the drug was used, how long ago and any pre-existing medical conditions. If they have taken a drug that came in a packet, give the packet to the ambulance officers.
- If you can't get a response from someone, don't assume they're asleep. Not all overdoses happen quickly and sometimes it can take hours for someone to die. Doing something early could save a life.
- Update your Incident and/or Injury Register with all required details(12)

DEVELOPING A WORKPLACE ALCOHOL AND DRUG POLICY

Alcohol and drugs—including medicines prescribed by a doctor or available from a pharmacy—can affect a person's ability to work safely. For help developing a policy for your workplace, please visit: www.apacsecutiry.com.au/workplacepolicy.