

FACTS

ECSTASY/ XTC

What is Ecstasy?

MDMA, with street alias, Ecstasy, is a designer drug usually found at raves. MDMA is an amphetamine derivative and it is considered to be a strong stimulant. Its chemical structure is similar to two other synthetic drugs, methamphetamine and MDA.

What are the effects of Ecstasy?

MDMA stimulates the release of the serotonin from brain neurons, producing a high that lasts from several minutes to an hour. The drug's rewarding effects vary with the individual taking it, the dose and purity, and the environment in which it is taken. MDMA can produce stimulant effects such as an enhanced sense of pleasure and self-confidence and increased energy. Its psychedelic effects include feelings of peacefulness, acceptance, and empathy. Users claim they experience feelings of closeness with others and a desire to touch them.

LONG TERM EFFECTS:

With regular and frequent use, tolerance builds to the effects of the drug, while dangerous results increase with continued use. The drug effects are unpredictable among different individuals even if given the same dosage.

Users' experience:

- confusion
- depression
- sleep problems
- drug craving
- severe anxiety
- paranoia-during and sometimes weeks after use (even psychotic episodes have been reported)
- muscle tension
- involuntary teeth-clenching
- nausea
- blurred vision
- rapid eye movements
- faintness
- chills or sweating

- Increases in heart rate and blood pressure (a special risk for people with circulatory or heart disease).
- MDMA appears to cause degeneration of neurons containing the neurotransmitter dopamine; the underlying cause of the motor disturbances seen in Parkinson's disease. Symptoms of this disease begin with lack of coordination and tremors and can eventually result in a form of paralysis.
- Recent research findings also link MDMA use to long-term (possibly permanent) damage to those parts of the brain critical to thought and memory. It is thought that the drug causes long-term damage to the neurons that use the chemical, Serotonin, to communicate with other neurons.
- Also, there is evidence that people who develop a rash that looks like acne after using MDMA may be risking severe side effects, including liver damage if they continue to use the drug.

FATAL RISKS:

According to the Government and Drug Agencies, MDMA has become a nationwide problem as well as a serious health threat. It is known to be lethal.

Combining MDMA with alcohol or depressants can increase the possibility of negative effects including:

- sedation
- dehydration
- exhaustion
- overheating
- heart failure

Combining MDMA with Rohypnol can lead to:

- heart failure
- coma
- death

Even in healthy young individuals, combined use of these drugs has caused coma and death.

Source:

<http://www.patient.co.uk/health/recreational-drugs>