

## Cocaine

Cocaine is a stimulant drug derived from the leaves of the coca bush which is processed to make cocaine.

Cocaine is usually in the form of a white powder (cocaine hydrochloride) which has a bitter and numbing taste. Coca can be processed to make cocaine base, known as freebase which is a more pure white powder and crack which is in the form of crystals which may be white, pink or yellow.

### Other names

C, coke, nose candy, blow, snow, white lady, Charlie, toot, white dust or stardust.

### The Effects

#### Low to moderate doses

Effects may include:

- Immediate rush
- Dilated pupils
- Sense of invincibility
- Increased talkativeness
- Increased libido
- Paranoia
- Increased blood pressure and heart rate
- Unpredictable aggressive or violent behaviour.

#### Higher doses

Effects may include:

- Anxiety
- Sleep disorders
- Paranoia
- Nausea and vomiting
- Chest pain
- Seizures, convulsions
- Heart attack and stroke

High doses and frequent heavy use can cause cocaine psychosis with symptoms including:

- Paranoid delusions
- Hallucinations
- Bizarre aggressive or violent behaviour

These symptoms usually disappear a few days after the person stops using cocaine.

### Coming down

As the effects of cocaine wear off you may experience

- Tension, agitation, anxiety
- Intense hunger
- Restless sleep

- Radical mood swings
- Depression
- Exhaustion

### Preventing and Reducing Harm

#### Injecting

Injecting cocaine may cause:

- vein and skin damage, abscesses and ulcers
- becoming dependent
- damage to heart, lungs, liver and brain,
- infections such as tetanus, tuberculosis, Hepatitis B and C and HIV/AIDS
- stroke

Sharing equipment such as needles and syringes greatly increases the risk of contracting blood borne viruses such as Hepatitis B, Hepatitis C and HIV.

It is safest not to inject drugs. However, if you choose to inject you should always use new clean equipment. The National Alcohol and other Drug Hotline [1800 250 015](tel:1800250015) can provide information on where to obtain clean needles and syringes in your state and territory.

#### Legal Issues

Federal and state laws provide penalties for possessing, using, making or selling cocaine, or driving under their influence.