

# What are the Effects of Using Drugs?

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The effects of drugs vary depending on the type of drug, of course, but also due to many other variables. Some of those variables are based on the factors in the drug itself when it's consumed. Other variables are person-specific. Here we'll discuss the range of effects of drugs on the user and society. We'll also look at drug abuse indicators, and how drugs impact an individual's physical and mental health, relationships, finances, work, academic performance, social life, and reputation.

## Signs and Symptoms of Drug Abuse

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Each drug causes its own set of specific symptoms, and each user is impacted in particular ways due to their own combination of body conditions and drug-use behaviors. So, this is a very general list of some of the most common symptoms of drug abuse:

- Anxiety
- Insomnia
- Anger issues
- Excessive sleeping
- Depression
- Paranoia
- Exhaustion
- Headaches
- Nausea
- Loss of appetite
- Skin conditions
- Poor dental health

- Addiction
- Increased heart rate
- Increased blood pressure
- Withdrawal symptoms when trying to stop using
- Vision impairment
- Memory loss
- A lot of time spent getting and using the drug
- Social withdrawal
- Loss of interest in once favorite activities

## How the Body Processes Drugs

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When a drug is consumed, it is absorbed into the blood, distributed to the various organs, and broken down into simpler molecules (metabolites). The metabolized drugs pass through the digestive system and exit from the body, typically in feces or urine.

How long it takes for the body to pass a drug out of the system depends on a range of factors. Those generally include the type and strength of the drug, how much of the substance is consumed, the drug itself (how much you took, the user's environment, age, metabolism, health, food or fluids consumed, and other factors).

## General Effects of Drugs on Users

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The long and short-term effects of drugs on individuals range from moderate to catastrophic. General effects of drugs in the body and on the lives of users can include:

- **Mental Health Effects:** Drug abuse increases the risk of depression, anxiety, psychosis, and other mental disorders.
- **Physical Health Effects:** Drug misuse can devastate physical health, causing brain and other organ damage, even death.
- **Financial Effects:** Drug dependency can lead to financial failure due to job loss or abandoning education goals.
- **Relationship Effects:** Drug use changes behavior, risking injury, assault, and broken relationships.
- **Legal Problems:** You can be arrested, convicted, fined, sent to prison, and have a criminal record for drug abuse.

## How Drug Effects Vary Between Users

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From amphetamines to opioids, different types of substances cause different kinds of physical effects, including the effects of drugs on the brain. Some drugs increase the sense of energy and sharpen awareness. Others cause a relaxed or sedate feeling or even numb the body. Yet others distort consciousness in much more extreme ways, causing hallucinations.

The physiological effects of drugs on a person are determined by:

- The type of drug
- How it was consumed  
(smoked, swallowed, injected, snorted)
- The amount consumed
- The drug's strength/purity
- How frequently the person uses it
- The user's gender
- How much the person has eaten
- Mental health
- Physical health
- The individual's body size
- If the user mixed alcohol or other drugs with it

## Drug Addiction and Dependence

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Using a drug frequently can lead to *tolerance*, causing you to require more of the drug to experience the same level of high effect. Using it regularly may lead to *dependence* on the drug, causing the user to feel he/she needs the drug to feel well and function well. Drug addiction can be in the form of physical or mental dependence. When addicted, users will continue using a drug even knowing that it is harming them.

## Withdrawal Symptoms

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When a person attempts to stop using a drug or take less of it, he or she may suffer from physical and/or mental symptoms. Withdrawal symptoms can include:

- Depression
- Exhaustion
- Appetite loss
- Irritability
- Aggression
- Anxiety
- Paranoia
- Intense cravings for the drug
- Convulsions
- Death

## Effects of Drug Abuse on Society

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These negative effects of drugs include potential addiction. At that threshold, drug use can become especially burdensome to the social health and economy of a nation. The cost of lost worker productivity, crime, health care costs, broken families, and other losses add up to a heavy price for a society absorbing a serious drug problem across a large number of drug abusers.

The widespread short and long-term effects of drugs on youth, and the overall social effects of drugs and their impact on the national economy are staggering. Drug use costs the U.S. around \$600 billion per year.

## **Renaissance Recovery Center to Overcome Addiction**

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Renaissance offers a customized drug addiction treatment program for every client. Our outpatient rehab team includes addiction recovery specialists, MDs, multiple other SUD treatment specialists, and other professionals.

**Call Renaissance Recovery Center at (480) 526-7738, or contact us here on our website for information about drug rehab or schedule a free personal assessment.**

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