

What is Cocaine

Aka: Yay, Coke, Snow, Blow, Base, Rail.

Cocaine is a substance extracted from coca leaves, it is prepared synthetically and classified as a stimulant. This means that it gets you up and keeps you going.



How it's used

Snorting is the most common way of using cocaine. When snorted, cocaine is absorbed through the mucous membranes that line the nose and sinuses.

Another method of use is to smoke cocaine that has been processed to make a rock crystal (also called "freebase cocaine"). The crystal is heated to produce vapors that are inhaled into the lungs.

This form of cocaine is called Crack, which refers to the crackling sound of the rock as it's heated.

This resource will specifically focus on cocaine in powder form and snorting.

Resources

SESSIONS is a series of drug education workshops for youth ages 13 to 24. It provides an open space for participants to talk and expand their knowledge about substances.

www.skylarkyouth.org



For information on other substances, mixing and harm reduction, check out:

www.tripsit.me

www.drugsand.me

www.tripproject.ca

www.dancesafe.org

Please note: We do not encourage drug use.

Rather, we intend to provide non-judgmental information so that individuals who choose to use drugs can make informed choices about their health and reduce risk. The only way to completely eliminate risk is to abstain from drug use.



Follow us on social media for more harm reduction tips!

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Cocaine



A RESOURCE BY SKYLARK'S PEER YOUTH
HARM REDUCTION TEAM

Preparation

- Eat a meal before you start using.
- Carry and use condoms, lube, dental dams and other safe sex supplies as cocaine can increase sexual desire and safe sex is the best sex!
- If you use heavily you may need a recovery day, so plan ahead for this.
- Mixing cocaine with other substances can increase health risks and the potential for overdose. View the "Trip! Project" and "Drugs and Me" resources provided on the back for more information on mixing.
- Ensure that you are in a safe environment with people you trust.

The Come Down

- Coming down from the high can often be uncomfortable; know that the worst part of the crash usually only lasts for 45 mins to an hour. Relaxation techniques can be used to calm down during this time. Sometimes eating can also help you feel better.
- If you struggle with mental health, it is especially important to plan ahead for what you can do if you experience difficult emotions after you use.
- After you use, drink lots of liquids and prepare something to do in case you have trouble sleeping.

Harm Reduction

- Cocaine is often cut with other substances in order to increase profits, which makes it hard to know the potency/purity. Remember to always start with a small amount (aka a test dose) and pace yourself.
- Chop up the cocaine into a very fine powder as larger pieces can be harmful for the nasal cavity. Use a sterile surface to do this.
- Insert the straw high up into the nasal passage before snorting, when cocaine is left in the nostril it can lead to irritation and a damaged septum.
- Alternate nostrils each time you use.
- Rinse out your nostril(s) after snorting with water or saline solution. This will help to clear the nostril and prevent nasal damage.
- Avoid sharing straws or other snorting devices as this can lead to disease transmission. When using with others, use different coloured straws.
- Don't use money to snort cocaine as this can lead to the transmission of Hep C.
- Sometimes people will pick their skin when high, instead of doing this keep something in your hands to play with! Or if you chew your lips/grind your teeth, try chewing gum instead.

Stimulant Overdose

Remember that a cocaine overdose is not always dose-dependent. If your cocaine has been cut with other substances that are not stimulants an overdose may look different.

Increasing risk factors:

- Low/no tolerance of cocaine
- Sleep deprivation
- Food deprivation/dehydration
- Using other substances with cocaine

Signs of an overdose:

- Nausea or throwing up
- Blacking out
- Increased body temperature or sweating
- Seizures
- Muscle cramps or stiffness.
- Signs of a heart attack include tight chest, racing heart, short/irregular breathing

What to do:

- Call 911 immediately. Provide professionals with as much information as possible.
- If there is no heartbeat and you know CPR, begin chest compressions.
- Keep calm. Stay with them. Monitor their symptoms. Give them water.
- Place cool, wet cloths under armpits, back of neck and head.
- If there is a chance they used an opioid, administer naloxone.