Why do you drink alcohol?

Understanding why you drink can be a first step toward finding healthier alternatives.

Common Reasons

- Social situations and celebrations
- Managing stress or difficult emotions
- Coping with boredom or loneliness
- Habit or routine
- Peer pressure

While these are normal situations, there are healthier ways to handle them than to use alcohol.

Reduce to Feel Better!

Reducing the amount you drink improves sleep quality, mood, and concentration.

Slow Down

- **Eat food with your drink. Food slows down the speed of alcohol absorption.**
- **Drink a non-alcoholic drink in between each alcoholic drink.**
- **Limit yourself to 1 standard drink per hour.**

Want to cut back or quit?

Everyone's journey is unique.
Here are some possible starting points you can choose from. Even small steps are progress.

- **Start by cutting back. Keep track of your drinking to stay aware and make informed choices.**
- **Try alcohol-free days to reassess your relationship with drinking.**
- **Plan ahead for challenging situations.**
- **Seek out new activities and hobbies.**
- **Stop completely if and when you feel ready. Support is available.**

Connect to Support

Treatment is available. Contact your healthcare provider for assistance.

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ALCOHOL

Think beyond the buzz



Count the Amount

Drinking alcohol in any amount increases your health risks.

Counting your drinks can help you make informed decisions.

A "standard drink" contains 0.6 fluid ounces of pure alcohol. Alcohol by volume (ABV) varies in different beverages.

Examples of one standard drink:

- 12 oz regular beer (5% ABV)
- 5 oz table wine (12% ABV)
- 1.5 oz shot of 80-proof spirits (40% ABV)

As shown below, common serving sizes are often different from a single standard drink.

Number of Standard Drinks in Common Serving Sizes



Does drinking affect your daily life?

Here are possible signs that alcohol use may be affecting your daily life and well-being:

- You feel a strong need to drink.
- Your drinking causes problems for you or others.
- Drinking makes it harder for you to do important things.
- Other people say you should drink less.
- It is difficult for you to drink less.

Change is possible. Support is available.

The more drinks you consume, the higher your health risks.

Health Risk by Number of Weekly Standard Drinks



To assess your risk, use drink calculators and planning tools available at

rethinkingdrinking.niaaa.nih.gov

Health Risks of Alcohol Use



- **Interferes with your ability to communicate**
- **Changes mood and behavior**
- **Makes thinking and coordination harder**
- **Impairs judgment, leading to risky behaviors**

Heart: Can raise your blood pressure and increase your chances of having a stroke or developing some types of heart disease

Cancer: Can increase your risk for developing cancers of the mouth, throat, esophagus, liver, breast, and colon

Immune system: Weakens your body's ability to fight infections and viruses

Pregnancy: Alcohol, even small amounts, can disrupt fetal brain development



Warning Signs of Dependence

It is possible to become dependent on bath salts, but if you know what signs to watch for, you can get help early.

- **Mood swings**
- **Agitation**
- **Declining performance** *(School, work, etc.)*
- **Withdrawing socially**
- **Changes in sleep patterns**
- **Concerning health symptoms** *(Rapid heartbeat, paranoia, hallucinations)*

You may not realize how quickly dependence and negative effects can develop, which is why it is so important to reach out for support early.

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BATH SALTS

Innocent Name, Toxic Substance



What are “bath salts?”

Bath salts are human-made drugs. People use bath salts for feelings of alertness or euphoria, similar to the effects of cocaine, methamphetamines, or MDMA.

It is illegal to sell bath salts, yet they are widely accessible. To evade law enforcement, bath salts are often sold in small packets and may be labeled as:

- “plant food”
- “fertilizer”
- “glass cleaner”
- “research chemicals”

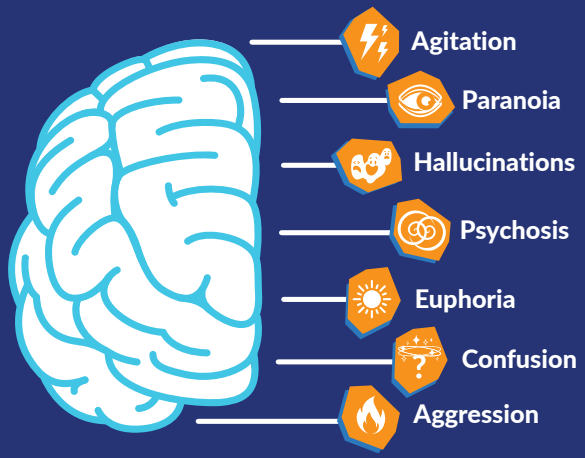
How are bath salts used?

Bath salts are typically ingested by snorting, but they are also smoked, injected, or taken orally.

Bath salts have unpredictable effects because ingredients and potency vary batch to batch.

How do bath salts affect the body?

Bath salts flood your brain with chemicals that trigger your body’s fight-or-flight response. When you take bath salts you may experience:



Bath salts can also trigger:

- Rapid heartbeat
- High body temperature
- High blood pressure
- Chest pain
- Excessive sweating
- Teeth grinding
- Heart palpitations
- Nausea/vomiting



Using bath salts is risky.

Despite their name, these bath salts are not bath products.

You can overdose.
Your body develops a tolerance to bath salts quickly, which means you need to take more of the drug to feel the same effect. Increasing doses puts you at greater risk for overdose.

You can become dependent.
Stress, social pressure, and using other substances can make the urge to use bath salts even stronger.

! Prevent fatal overdose!

Call 911 immediately if someone shows signs of overdose.

Bath salts intoxication can rapidly become life-threatening. Signs of overdose include unconsciousness, difficulty breathing, seizures, chest pain, and severe agitation.

Opioid overdose reversal medications, such as naloxone, do not work for bath salt overdoses.

Good Samaritan Law

In Arkansas, the Joshua Ashley-Pauley Act protects individuals involved in an overdose rescue.

Neither the person experiencing an overdose nor the person who calls for medical help will be arrested, charged, or prosecuted for possessing illicit substances.

Treatment & Recovery

Effective treatment options available in Arkansas include:

- Withdrawal management
- Medication-assisted treatment
- Residential care
- Individual and group counseling

Recovery options available in Arkansas include:

- Certified peer specialists who have lived experience with substance use and recovery
- Recovery community organizations
- Recovery residences
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CARFENTANIL

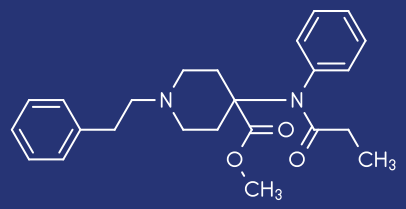
Lethal in tiny amounts



What is carfentanil?

Carfentanil is an extremely powerful synthetic opioid originally designed for veterinarians to sedate large animals, such as elephants.

It is in the same family of drugs as fentanyl but is about 100 times stronger. This makes it extremely hazardous for humans to either touch or ingest.



How is carfentanil used?

Carfentanil may be injected, snorted, or even absorbed through the skin. It is also possible to inhale carfentanil without meaning to.

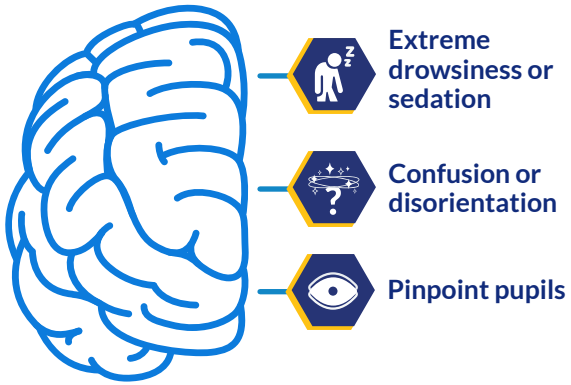
Carfentanil is often mixed with other drugs, like heroin. It may also be sold as a pill that is labeled with another, less potent drug's name.

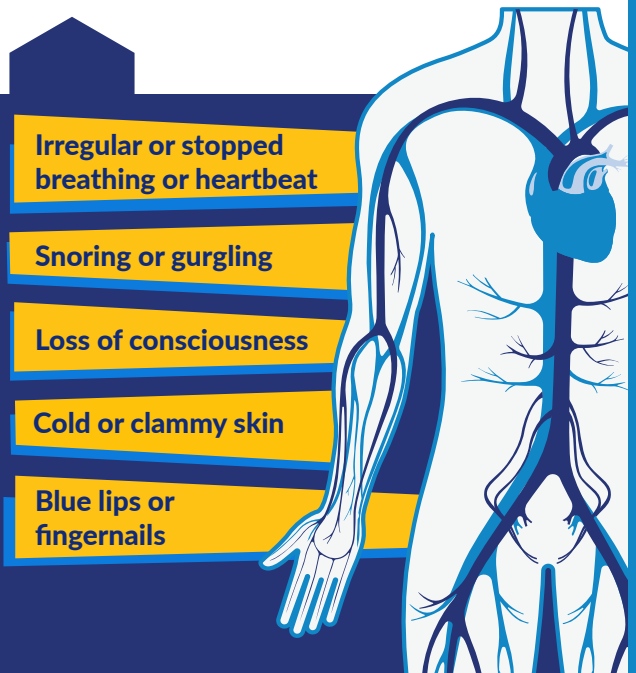
This means you may not know that you are taking carfentanil.

Signs of Overdose

Tiny doses of carfentanil have very strong effects. You can feel euphoria or pain relief. However, it can make your breathing become shallow, slow, or stop completely.

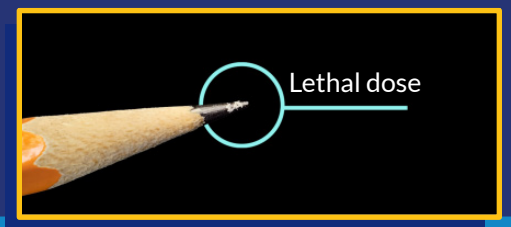
Watch for these overdose symptoms:





Avoid Handling

- Less than a milligram of carfentanil can result in a fatal overdose.
- Avoid handling unknown powders. Though accidental brief skin contact is unlikely to cause opioid toxicity, inhalation, ingestion, mucous membrane exposure, or prolonged contact with potent opioids can be dangerous.



Use an OORM for rescue.

- Carry an opioid overdose reversal medication (OORM), such as naloxone, which can be purchased over the counter.
- **In case of overdose, call 911 first, then administer an OORM.**
- Carfentanil is stronger than other opioids. Repeated doses of the OORM may be required.



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CBD

and CBD-derived psychoactive products

Health Risk Update



What are derived psychoactive CBD products?

CBD is a chemical found in cannabis plants. Pure CBD is not psychoactive (it does not get you high). However, CBD can be altered to be psychoactive. Some derived chemicals include Delta-8, Delta-10, HHC, THC-O, THCP, and THCV.

These chemicals can be used in:

- Edibles, such as gummies and chocolate
- Vape cartridges
- Tinctures (liquid)
- Capsules

Legal Status in Arkansas

In Arkansas, Act 629 (HB 533) banned psychoactive CBD products that were previously sold in stores.

To purchase CBD-derived products with more than 1 milligram of THC per container, you must have a medical cannabis card and purchase through a state-regulated dispensary.

Due to safety concerns, all other use has been banned.

How does it affect you?

The only CBD medication approved by the FDA is Epidiolex®, used to treat seizures. Although CBD products are marketed to safely treat different health conditions, many claims are not backed by research.

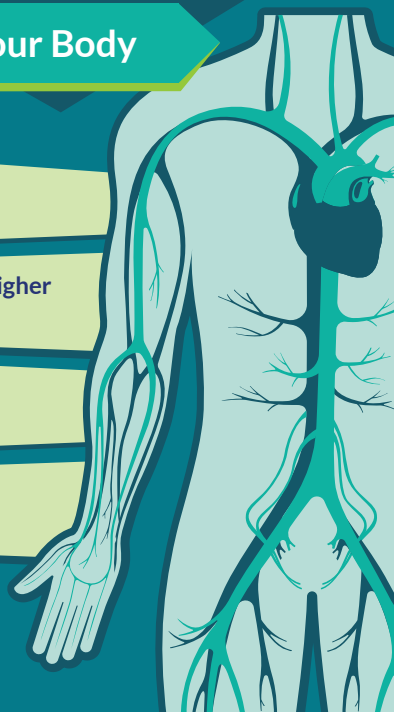
Changes in Mood or Thought



- Feeling euphoric, anxious, or paranoid
- Impaired thinking, judgment, and coordination
- Feeling tired

Changes in Your Body

- Red eyes and dry mouth
- Fast heart rate and higher blood pressure
- Stomach and intestinal problems
- Clumsiness, tremors, seizures, and coma



Risks

Vaping CBD or CBD-derived products can cause lung damage and breathing problems. In some cases, hospitalization may be required to treat lung injury.

Use can interfere with other prescribed medications.

Parental use of CBD or CBD-derived products can harm fetal and infant development.

The FDA strongly advises against use of CBD products while pregnant or nursing.

There are no national requirements to test or to properly label CBD-derived products.

Products can contain dangerous substances such as:

- Heavy metals
- Pesticides

Much more potent and unsafe doses than the label suggests

Overdose Response

Call 911 immediately if you suspect a drug overdose!

Symptoms of cocaine overdose can include:

- loss of consciousness
- difficulty breathing, seeing, or feeling
- head or chest pain
- nausea or vomiting
- teeth grinding
- high temperature
- seizures

Opioid overdose reversal medications (OORMs), such as naloxone, are not effective on cocaine, but if you suspect that an opioid drug may be involved, you can administer an OORM safely.

Good Samaritan Law

In Arkansas, the Joshua Ashley-Pauley Act protects individuals involved in a drug overdose rescue.

Neither the person experiencing an overdose nor the person who calls for medical help will be arrested, charged, or prosecuted for possessing illicit substances.

Connect to Support

Treatment is available for substance use disorders. Contact your healthcare provider for assistance.

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COCAINE / CRACK

Risk Update



What is cocaine/crack?

Cocaine is an addictive stimulant that is made from the leaves of the coca plant.

It can be processed into a water-soluble powder or into a crystal form, which is called “crack” because of the sound it makes when it is heated.

How is cocaine used?

The powder form can be snorted, rubbed on the gums, or dissolved in water for injection. The crack form is smoked.

Cocaine is frequently combined with other drugs, such as alcohol and heroin. Fentanyl and xylazine have been mixed into cocaine supplies without users knowing it.

Combining cocaine with other drugs greatly increases the risk of overdose and death.

How does cocaine affect your body?

People usually feel the effects of cocaine within 3–5 minutes after snorting it or within seconds after injecting.



You can feel more energetic, focused, confident, and euphoric.

Your heart beats faster and your blood pressure and body temperature increase. Your pupils can dilate.

BINGE CYCLE

You can have decreased appetite or nausea.



Because the high tends to be short, people often experience a rapid swing into distress, depression, and intense cravings once the drug wears off.

This cycle often leads to binging. Over time you can build tolerance, requiring more of the drug to get the same effect.

What are the risks of cocaine?

Cocaine is highly addictive and can cause serious health problems.

Cardiovascular problems

You can experience severe chest pain, difficulty breathing, and permanent heart and lung damage. Cocaine use can trigger heart attacks or strokes, even among very healthy people.

Nasal damage

Snorting cocaine can result in a lost sense of smell, breakdown of the nose cavity, and chronic nosebleeds.

Brain and mood disorders

Cocaine use can harm your attention, decision-making skills, and memory. Long-term use or high doses can cause paranoia or violent behavior.

Complications in pregnancy and fetal development

People who use cocaine during pregnancy are more likely to experience migraines, seizures, miscarriage, and complications in labor. Babies are more likely to be delivered preterm with low birthweight.

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FENTANYL

An invisible threat



What is fentanyl?

Fentanyl is a powerful lab-made opioid drug. It can be used in medical settings for pain management and anesthesia.

It is 50 times stronger than heroin and 100 times stronger than morphine.

Synthetic opioids, primarily fentanyl, account for most overdose deaths in the United States.

How is fentanyl used?

Fentanyl comes in two forms: powder and liquid. There are many different types of delivery: pills, blotter paper, patches, nasal spray, eyedrops, and injectable liquids.

It is common for fentanyl to be mixed with other drugs to increase potency. It may be packaged to look like other medications.

You cannot see, smell, or taste fentanyl added to other substances.

Many people who overdose were not aware they had taken it.

Fentanyl is highly addictive.
It can make you feel euphoric or give you pain relief. People who use it repeatedly build tolerance. They will have to take stronger doses to get the same effect. This increases the risk of overdose.

Fentanyl overdoses can be fatal.

Signs of Overdose

- **Extreme drowsiness or loss of consciousness**
- **Confusion or disorientation**
- **Pinpoint pupils**
- **Irregular or stopped breathing or heartbeat**
- **Snoring or gurgling**
- **Cold or clammy skin**
- **Blue lips or fingernails**

Avoid Handling

Avoid handling unknown powders.
Though accidental brief skin contact is unlikely to cause opioid toxicity, inhalation, ingestion, mucous membrane exposure, or prolonged contact with fentanyl or other potent opioids can be dangerous.

Use an OORM for rescue.

Carry an opioid overdose reversal medication (OORM), such as naloxone, which can be purchased over the counter.

In case of overdose, call 911 first, then administer an OORM.

Because of fentanyl's strength, multiple doses of the OORM may be required.



Good Samaritan Law

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GHB

(Gamma-hydroxybutyrate)

Hidden dangers in a clear liquid



What is GHB?

Gamma-Hydroxybutyrate (GHB) is a substance that occurs naturally in small amounts in the central nervous system.

As a drug, it most often takes the form of a clear, odorless liquid. It can also come in the form of a white powder or in capsules.

Though it has a legitimate medical use to treat individuals with narcolepsy, it is also widely misused.

How is GHB used?

GHB is misused for several reasons:

- Euphoria
- Weight Loss
- "Date rape drug"

Typically added to an individual's drink without their knowledge, GHB can cause sedation, confusion, amnesia, and unconsciousness. This makes victims vulnerable to sexual assault and other crimes.

How does GHB affect you?

Misusing GHB can have harmful effects on your brain and body.



- Euphoria
- Confusion
- Memory loss
- Hallucinations
- Aggressive behavior

GHB takes effect in 15–30 minutes, with the effects lasting 3–6 hours.

At high doses, GHB can cause:

- Seizures
- Low body temperature
- Slowed heart rate
- Slowed breathing
- Unconsciousness
- Nausea/vomiting



Overdose Risk

GHB has a narrow safety margin. It can go from relaxing to dangerous with tiny increases in the dose.

Mixing GHB with alcohol, opioids (such as fentanyl or heroin), or benzodiazepines (such as Xanax® or Valium®) makes it much more likely the person will have an overdose.

Overdose Rescue

GHB is not an opioid, so opioid overdose reversal drugs, such as naloxone, do not work to reverse the effects of an overdose.

Call 911 immediately if you suspect a drug overdose.

Overdose symptoms may include seizures, chest pain, difficulty breathing, or loss of consciousness.

Good Samaritan Law

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HALLUCINOGENS

Stepping "out of reality" is hazardous to your health



What are hallucinogens?

Hallucinogens are substances that change the way you see, hear, and feel things around you. They can be grown naturally from plants or mushrooms or made in a lab.

Psilocybin mushrooms, peyote cactus (mescaline), DMT, and LSD are examples of hallucinogens.

How does use affect you?

Hallucinogens mostly act on the serotonin system in your brain, which affects your senses, thoughts, and mood. Hallucinogens can also cause physical reactions. Here is what you may feel if you take a hallucinogen:

- Hallucinations (seeing or hearing things that aren't there)
- Changed sense of time
- Mood swings from euphoria to panic
- Fear, anxiety, or depression
- Nausea, vomiting, sweating, tremors, or rapid heart rate

What are the risks?

It is hard to know how hallucinogens will affect you. Your experience can be very different from one use to the next.

These are some of the risks associated with hallucinogen use:

Intense fear, confusion, or paranoia
These effects can last for several hours.

Flashbacks
This is a condition called Hallucinogen Persisting Perception Disorder (HPPD), where you continue to experience visual problems or mental disturbances even after the drug's effects have worn off, sometimes months or years later.

Serious physical injury or death
Changed perception and judgment can lead you to take dangerous risks you wouldn't normally take. Some deaths have occurred from misidentifying poisonous mushrooms. Some hallucinogens, such as PCP, can cause acute overdose leading to death.

Signs of a problem

Ask for help if you or someone you know experiences any of these issues related to use of hallucinogens:

- Panic or paranoia
- Persistent flashbacks or changes in mood
- Mental health problems (anxiety, depression, psychosis) that are getting worse
- Any medical emergency linked to using hallucinogens

Call 911 Immediately!

If you or someone else experiences any signs of overdose, immediately call for emergency medical service.

Unconsciousness

Difficulty breathing

Convulsions or seizures

Good Samaritan Law

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HEROIN

Facts about illicit opioids



What is heroin?

Heroin is an illicit opioid. Opioids are a class of drugs used primarily for pain relief. Some opioids have legitimate medical uses and are available by prescription.

Heroin and other opioids, such as illicitly manufactured fentanyl, have no medical use. They are highly addictive and a leading driver of overdose deaths.

How is heroin used?

Heroin can be taken orally, snorted, smoked, and injected.

It is difficult to determine how much you are taking. Heroin is frequently "cut" with other substances, such as illicit fentanyl.

While pure heroin is dangerous on its own, the risk of overdose greatly increases when it is contaminated or mixed with other drugs or alcohol.

How does heroin affect the body?



Brain

You can experience a pleasurable rush followed by drowsiness and impaired mental function.



Extremities

Your extremities can feel very heavy. Your skin can feel warm or very itchy. Your mouth can feel dry.



Heart

Your heartbeat and breathing slow down. This can cause your skin to turn blue and prevent oxygen from getting to the brain. This can cause permanent injury or death.

Long-term heroin use is associated with many serious health problems:

- Insomnia
- Sexual dysfunction
- Depression
- Collapsed veins
- Heart, liver, and kidney conditions
- Hepatitis B and C and HIV infection

Heroin use during pregnancy can harm fetal development and increases the risk of preterm birth or stillbirth.

Heroin is highly addictive.

People quickly develop tolerance to heroin and require increasingly larger amounts to feel the same effects.

Withdrawal symptoms may occur within hours of your last dose. Symptoms can include extreme pain, insomnia, diarrhea, vomiting, cold flashes, and involuntary leg movements. **A healthcare provider can prescribe medications to ease uncomfortable symptoms.**

! Overdose Response

Carry an opioid overdose reversal medication (OORM), such as naloxone, which is available over the counter.

In case of overdose, call 911 first, then administer an OORM.

Overdose symptoms may include:

Slow or irregular breathing or heartrate	*Snoring, gurgling, or choking sounds*
Loss of consciousness	*Pinpoint pupils*
Cold, clammy skin	*Blue lips or nails*

Treatment & Recovery

Inhalants can be addictive, and because the high does not last long, people who use inhalants may inhale over and over again for several hours.

This can make it even harder to stop, and it can mean you need to use more to feel the same effects over time.

You can get help to stop using.

Effective treatment options include:

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INHALANTS

Everyday products have serious risks when misused



What are inhalants?

Inhalants are common household or workplace products that give off toxic chemical vapors. People inhale the vapors to feel a quick high.

Because it is legal to buy inhalant products, children and young teenagers can easily find them in their own homes and schools.

Some common inhalants are paint thinners; gasoline; glues; aerosols; and gases like nitrous oxide (laughing gas), butane, and propane.

How are inhalants used?

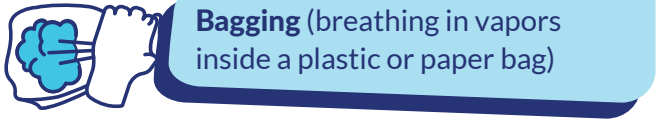
There are several ways people use inhalants.



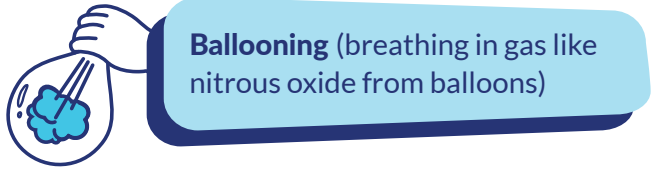
Sniffing or snorting directly from containers



Huffing from a rag soaked in chemicals



Bagging (breathing in vapors inside a plastic or paper bag)



Ballooning (breathing in gas like nitrous oxide from balloons)

How do inhalants affect your brain and body?

Most inhalants make you feel a short high, like being drunk on alcohol. They affect many of your body's important functions by slowing down your central nervous system. **Here's what that can look like:**



Brain

You can feel euphoric, dizzy, sleepy, and confused.



Vision

Things may look distorted, and you may have hallucinations.



Heart

Your heart can beat irregularly or even stop without warning.



Lungs

You can stop breathing.



Stomach

You can feel nauseous and vomit.

If you use inhalants regularly for a long time, it can cause permanent damage to your brain, nervous system, and other organs. It can also cause mental health issues.

What are the signs someone is using inhalants?

If someone you know is using inhalants, you may notice these signs:

- A strong chemical smell on their breath or clothing
- Red, watery eyes or runny nose
- Hidden empty spray cans or rags
- A dazed, dizzy, or disoriented appearance

What are the risks of using inhalants?

You can have "sudden sniffing death."

You can die from using inhalants just once. Inhalants can make your heart stop within minutes and can cause you to suffocate.

You can have permanent brain damage.

Using inhalants for a long time can cause permanent damage to your brain and other organs. You can also have hearing loss and mental health problems.

Good Samaritan Law

In Arkansas, the Joshua Ashley-Pauley Act protects individuals involved in an overdose rescue.

Neither the person experiencing an overdose nor the person who calls for medical help will be arrested, charged, or prosecuted for possessing illicit substances.

Treatment & Recovery

Effective treatment options available in Arkansas include:

- Withdrawal management
- Medication-assisted treatment
- Residential care
- Individual and group counseling

Recovery options available in Arkansas include:

- Certified peer specialists who have lived experience with substance use and recovery
- Recovery community organizations
- Recovery residences
- Support groups, like Narcotics Anonymous

Connect to Support

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KRATOM

(Mitragyna speciosa)

"Natural" does not mean safe



What is kratom?

Kratom is made from the leaves of a tropical tree. It is marketed as a "natural supplement" to self-treat conditions, such as substance use disorders or chronic pain, or to "boost performance." Although it is not an opioid, it affects the brain in similar ways.

Because it is an addictive substance with potential health hazards, **possession of kratom is illegal in Arkansas.**

How is kratom used?

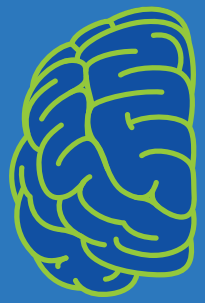
Most people take kratom by swallowing capsules or powder, but it is also possible to drink it as a tea or to chew or smoke the leaves.

How does it affect you?

Kratom's effects can vary based on how much you take. Low doses can act as stimulants, making you feel more alert or energetic. High doses can act like opioids, causing drowsiness and pain relief.

Physical Effects

Kratom may be marketed as a "natural" supplement, but it is not safe.



Brain: You can experience confusion, delusions, or hallucinations. You can also develop memory problems with long-term misuse.

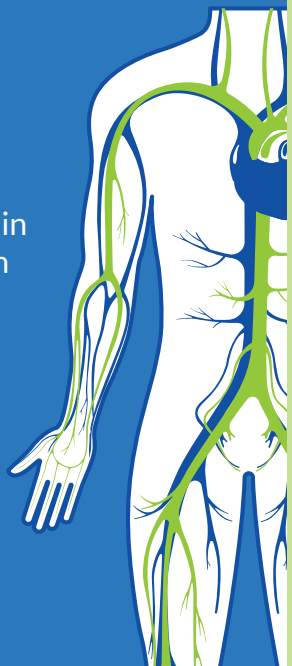
Nerves: You can have tremors or seizures

Heart: Your heart can beat very fast

Stomach: You can feel nauseous, vomit, become constipated, or lose your appetite.

Skin: You can feel sweaty or itchy and have a dry mouth.

Dependence: Your brain and your body can both become dependent on kratom, and you can have withdrawal symptoms if you stop using it.



What are the risks?

You can have liver damage or overdose. Mixing kratom with alcohol, opioids, or sedatives increases the risk of liver damage, overdose, or death. Because kratom is unregulated, it can contain other drugs that are not listed in the ingredients. There have also been cases of people getting sick from kratom that was contaminated with deadly germs, such as salmonella.

You can harm fetal development. Babies may be born requiring treatment for withdrawal symptoms.

Call 911 immediately if you notice signs of a potential drug overdose!

- Unconsciousness
- Difficulty breathing
- Vomiting
- Seizures

Opioid overdose reversal medications (OORMs), such as naloxone, are not designed for kratom misuse. However, if you suspect kratom has been mixed with an opioid drug, an OORM is safe to administer.

If marijuana use is affecting your health, relationships, or daily life, it is time to reach out. Talking to a counselor, doctor, or trusted friend is a strong first step.

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MARIJUANA

Know the facts to protect your health



What is marijuana?

Marijuana, also called cannabis, comes from the *Cannabis sativa* plant. It contains chemicals that can affect your mood, thoughts, and body. The main active ingredients are THC (tetrahydrocannabinol), which causes the "high," and CBD (cannabidiol).

In Arkansas, possession of marijuana is illegal unless you have a doctor's prescription and purchase it from a state-regulated dispensary.

Using the drug can be risky, especially if you use it often or take high doses.

How is marijuana used?

People use marijuana in different ways:

- **Smoking or vaping the dried plant or oils**
- **Eating or drinking products ("edibles") made with cannabis**
- **Applying creams or oils to the skin**

How does marijuana affect the body?

The THC in marijuana acts on the parts of your brain that control pleasure, memory, coordination, and how you perceive time. This can make you feel relaxed or happy at first, but it can also interfere with how your brain and body work.

Short term

- Euphoria or feeling "high"
- Slower reaction time and poor coordination
- Trouble remembering or focusing
- Anxiety or panic
- Red eyes, dry mouth, or fast heartbeat

Long term

Using marijuana heavily or for a long time can cause more serious effects:

- Problems with attention and memory
- Dependence or withdrawal symptoms when you stop
- Mood changes, depression, or paranoia
- Worsening of mental health conditions, such as anxiety or psychosis
- Lung damage from smoking
- Poor school or job performance

Even if marijuana feels harmless, regular use can change how your brain functions over time.

What are the risks of using marijuana?

You can become dependent.
Some people develop cannabis use disorder (CUD), a medical condition that happens when a person's marijuana use starts to cause harm or becomes hard to control. You might notice these signs in yourself or someone you care about.

Common warning signs include:

- Using more or longer than planned
- Feeling anxious, irritable, or unable to sleep without using marijuana
- Needing more to get the same effect (tolerance)
- Spending a lot of time thinking about or getting marijuana
- Continuing to use despite problems at work, school, or home
- Using in unsafe situations, like before driving

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METHAMPHETAMINE (METH)

Be aware of health hazards



What is methamphetamine?

Methamphetamine, often called meth, is a powerful stimulant that affects the brain and body.

Meth is extremely addictive. Overdoses can be fatal, and using it regularly can cause permanent damage to your brain and body.

How is meth used?

Meth usually comes in the form of a powder or capsule. It can be smoked, injected, snorted, or swallowed.

Other names for meth

- Crystal
- Ice
- Glass
- Tina
- Shards
- Crank
- Speed
- Batu
- Shabu
- Go-fast

How does meth affect your brain and body?

Meth stimulates your central nervous system and releases large amounts of dopamine, a brain chemical linked to pleasure. The short-term effects can be powerful and dangerous.



Brain

Bursts of energy/alertness, anxiety, irritability, insomnia; at high doses, violent behavior and hallucinations



Heart

Rapid heartbeat, high blood pressure; at high doses, risk of fatal stroke or heart attack



Lungs

Faster breathing



Appetite

Loss of appetite



Body Temperature

Feeling overheated; at high doses, dangerously high body temperature

Using meth increases the chances you will take other risks, such as unprotected sex.

Using meth is risky.

If you use meth for a longer period of time, you can also experience these effects:

- Extreme, unhealthy weight loss
- Severe dental problems
- Permanent organ damage

You can become dependent.
Meth changes how your brain feels pleasure. You may stop enjoying everyday activities you used to like. Taking meth may seem like the only way you can feel "normal."

You can overdose.
Meth can cause a heart attack or stroke. It can cause your body temperature to rise. Overdose can be deadly or have severe long-term health consequences.

Overdose Response

If someone shows signs of an overdose, call 911.

Opioid overdose reversal medications (OORMs), such as naloxone, are not effective for meth. However, if you suspect meth has been mixed with an opioid drug, an OORM is safe to administer.

Overdose Response

Carry an opioid overdose reversal medication (OORM). OORMs, such as naloxone, are OTC medications that can reverse some opioid overdoses.

If someone shows signs of overdose call 911. Signs can include loss of consciousness, difficulty breathing, seizures, or chest pain.

Then, administer the OORM if you suspect opioid involvement.

Treatment & Recovery

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OVER-THE-COUNTER (OTC) MEDICATIONS

Be aware of the risks of misuse



What are OTC medications?

OTC medicines are drugs you can buy without a prescription. They are dangerous if used in large amounts or in combination with other drugs.

Commonly misused OTC medicines are:

- **Pseudoephedrine**
  A decongestant used for nasal congestion
- **Dextromethorphan (DXM)**
  Found in many cough and cold medicines
- **Dimenhydrinate**
  Used to treat motion sickness, nausea, and vertigo
- **Loperamide**
  Used to treat diarrhea

Why do people misuse OTC medications?

- To self-medicate for pain or opioid withdrawal cravings
- To feel "high" or experience hallucinations
- Easy accessibility in homes and in stores

How do OTC medications affect your brain and body?

Taking high doses of OTC medications can affect many of your body's important systems, including your brain. Here are some examples:

Pseudoephedrine

- Hallucinations
- Heart irregularities
- Dizziness or seizures

Dextromethorphan (DXM)

- "Out-of-body" sensations
- Breathing problems
- Brain damage at very high doses

Dimenhydrinate

- Ringing in ears
- Seizures or coma
- Death at very high doses

Loperamide

- Blocked intestines
- Slowed breathing
- Life-threatening heart problems

What are the risks of misusing OTC medication?

You can become dependent. Many people do not realize that OTC drugs can be addictive. You can build tolerance. With repeated use, you need more to feel the same effects. You may also have withdrawal symptoms if you stop taking them.

You can overdose. When you take very high doses of DXM or loperamide, your breathing can slow down or even stop, cutting off oxygen to your brain, leading to coma, brain damage, or even death.



Safety Precautions

Consult your healthcare provider before use. Only use medication for the conditions indicated on the package. Follow directions for dosage.

Secure medication. Keep medication out of sight in a secure place to prevent misuse by others.

Call 911!

If you see signs of overdose, call 911 first, then administer an OORM.

- Extreme drowsiness or unconsciousness
- Irregular or stopped breathing or heartbeat
- Snoring or gurgling sounds
- Pinpoint pupils
- Cold, clammy skin
- Blue lips or fingernails

Treatment & Recovery

Effective treatment options available in Arkansas include:

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PRESCRIPTION OPIOIDS

Stay safe, stick to guidelines



What are prescription opioids?

Prescription opioids are powerful medications that help chronic or acute pain, such as after a surgery. They can be taken orally, through patches on the skin, or through injection. They are not intended for long-term use.

Examples of prescription opioids:

- Hydrocodone (Vicodin®, Lortab®)
- Oxycodone (OxyContin®, Percocet®)
- Morphine (Kadian®, Avinza®)
- Codeine (Tylenol® with Codeine)
- Fentanyl (Fentora®, Duragesic®)

How are they misused?

Misuse can be:

- Taking a medication in a manner or dose other than prescribed
- Taking someone else's prescription, even for legitimate complaints
- Using a medication to get "high"

How do they affect your brain and body?

Prescription opioids are intended to decrease pain and increase relaxation. Side effects can include drowsiness, confusion, nausea, constipation, and slowed breathing.

You can develop tolerance to opioids, requiring higher doses over time to get the same effect.

People who have chronic diseases or who take multiple medications are at greater risk of accidental misuse.

Skip counterfeits!

Never buy opioids from social media or sites that do not require a prescription.

Medications from these sources can be contaminated with extremely potent drugs, such as fentanyl or xylazine. Taking just one dose can cause permanent injury or fatal overdose.

Only purchase from U.S.-licensed pharmacies.

More info about medication safety is available at **fda.gov**.

Misuse is risky.

Substance Use Disorder & Withdrawal
You can become addicted to a prescription opioid. If you stop using it without medical supervision, you can experience severe muscle pain, sleep problems, cold flashes, and diarrhea.

Dangerous Drug Interactions
Misuse can prevent other prescriptions from working effectively. Combining opioids with alcohol or other drugs without medical supervision increases risk of overdose.

Falls
Misuse of prescription opioids increases older adults' risk of falling and injury.

Pregnancy Risk
Opioid misuse during pregnancy can harm your baby. Your baby can be born preterm, have low birthweight, and have painful withdrawal symptoms.

Avoid handling unknown powders.
Though accidental brief skin contact is unlikely to cause opioid toxicity, inhalation, ingestion, mucous membrane exposure, or prolonged contact with potent opioids can be dangerous.

Carry an OORM.

If you use opioids outside of prescribed guidelines, carry an opioid overdose reversal medication (OORM), such as naloxone, which can be purchased over the counter.



Talk to your healthcare provider

If you become dependent on a prescription stimulant, tell your healthcare provider.

Ask them to monitor your blood pressure and heart health.

They can help you make a plan that meets your needs.

Treatment & Recovery

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PRESCRIPTION STIMULANTS

Prevent misuse



What are prescription stimulants?

Prescription stimulants are medications used to treat attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) and narcolepsy.

Drugs in this category include:

- Amphetamine/Dextroamphetamine (Adderall®)
- Dextroamphetamine (Dexedrine®)
- Lisdexamfetamine (Vyvanse™)
- Methamphetamine (Desoxyn®)
- Methylphenidate (Concerta®, Ritalin®)

How are they misused?

Misuse can be:

- Taking a medication in a manner or dose other than prescribed
- Taking someone else's prescription, even for legitimate complaints
- Using a medication to get "high"

The average age that people in Arkansas start misusing prescription medication is 12.

Education about drug misuse should begin before 6th grade!

How do they affect your brain and body?

Desired effects of prescription stimulants are to increase alertness and focus. Side effects can include loss of appetite, insomnia, dramatic mood swings, nervousness, and fever. Jitteriness and social withdrawal are common side effects in children.

Misuse is risky.

Substance Use Disorder & Withdrawal

You can become dependent on prescription stimulants. Without medical supervision, withdrawal symptoms typically include extreme fatigue, depression, and irritability.

Health Problems

Chronic misuse can cause heart disease or psychotic symptoms similar to schizophrenia. It also makes you more prone to strokes.

Dangerous Drug Interactions

Stimulant misuse can prevent other prescribed medications from working effectively. Combining stimulants with alcohol or other drugs without medical supervision increases the risks of heart disease, stroke, and fatal overdose.

Skip counterfeits!

Never buy pills from social media or websites that do not require a prescription.

Drugs from these sources can be contaminated with extremely potent drugs, like fentanyl or xylazine.

Taking just one dose can cause permanent injury or fatal overdose.

Only purchase medications from U.S.–licensed pharmacies. More info about medication safety is available at fda.gov.

Call 911 for "overamping"

Overdosing on stimulants is called "overamping." Symptoms can include:

Racing pulse	Tremors
Nausea	Convulsions
Vomiting	Numbness
Shortness of breath	Blurred vision
High temperature	Unconsciousness
Chills	Hallucinations
Severe headache	Extreme agitation
Teeth grinding	Paranoia

Thinking about quitting?

Skip advice from online influencers and gym peers. Talk to a trusted coach, family member, or healthcare provider.

- Discuss your goals for appearance or performance. Ask them to help you make a plan to achieve those goals through physical training, nutrition, sleep, and stress reduction.
- Ask about safe ways to quit. Healthcare providers can help prevent or ease withdrawal symptoms.

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Anabolic-Androgenic STEROIDS

Performance vs. Health



What are AAS?

Anabolic-androgenic steroids (AAS) are synthetic variations of the male sex hormone testosterone. "**Anabolic**" refers to the drug's ability to promote muscle growth. "**Androgenic**" refers to its role in developing male sexual characteristics, such as a deeper voice and facial hair.

Doctors prescribe AAS to treat medical conditions like delayed puberty or disease-related muscle loss. However, AAS are illegally used to enhance athletic performance or appearance.

How are AAS misused?

AAS can be taken by mouth, injected directly into the muscles, or applied to the skin as a gel or on a patch. Individuals who misuse AAS follow specific dosing patterns to try to maximize muscle growth while minimizing side effects.

Cycling: Taking multiple doses over a specific period, stopping for a time, and then starting again.

Stacking: Combining two or more different types of steroids, such as mixing oral pills with injectable forms.

There is little evidence that these methods are effective or safe.

How do AAS affect you?

If you misuse AAS, you can experience:

Physical Changes

- Rapid muscle gain and more strength in weight-lifting or athletic activity
- Severe acne, cysts, and oily skin
- Thinning hair
- Shrunken testicles and breast enlargement in men
- Facial hair and a deeper voice in women

Mood Changes

- Intense mood and behavior changes
- Extreme irritability
- Aggression ("roid rage")

Dependence

Like other drugs, you can become dependent on AAS. You can feel anxious or irritable if you do not take it, and you can build tolerance, where you need to take increasingly larger amounts to get the same effect.

What are the risks?

Non-medical use of AAS can cause physical harm. Some conditions can be reversed after quitting use. Other conditions can be permanent and potentially life-threatening.

Organ Damage

Increased risk of early heart attacks, strokes, and blood clots, even in athletes under age 30.

Scarring, tumors, and failure of the liver and kidneys.

Sexual Dysfunction

In Males
Reduced sexual desire, erectile dysfunction, and low sperm count

In Females
Enlarged clitoris, disrupted menstrual cycle, and infertility

Injection-Related Infection

Injecting AAS puts you at risk for abscesses and infections.

Using shared or unsterile equipment puts you at risk for contracting HIV and hepatitis B and C.

People who have used AAS should ask their healthcare provider to monitor their heart, kidney, and liver health.

Synthetic does not mean safe.

Synthetic marijuana is not a safe alternative to cannabis.

Every batch is different, and the effects can be much stronger and more dangerous than cannabis.
A single use can threaten your life.

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SYNTHETIC MARIJUANA

Fake weed has real risks



What is synthetic marijuana?

Synthetic marijuana (sometimes called K2 or Spice) is a lab-made chemical that tries to mimic THC, the active ingredient in real marijuana. But it is not cannabis. It is a mix of chemicals sprayed onto dried plant material or dissolved into liquid.

The chemicals and amounts change from batch to batch. You can never be sure what is actually contained inside each product.

How is synthetic marijuana used?

People use synthetic marijuana in different ways:

- Smoked in pipes, water pipes, or rolled cigarettes
- Vaped using e-cigarettes or liquid vaporizer devices

How does it affect the body?

Synthetic marijuana is very powerful and unpredictable. The chemicals in synthetic products can strongly bind to brain receptors, causing not just a "high," but severe effects that can become life-threatening.

Short term

- Fast heartbeat, high blood pressure
- Nausea, vomiting
- Tremors, dizziness
- Anxiety, paranoia, panic attacks
- Confusion, hallucinations
- Seizures
- Chest pains, heart attack
- Damage to the kidneys

Long term

- Intense mood and behavior changes
- Psychotic episodes and violence
- Dependence and withdrawal symptoms
- Possible permanent organ damage
- Lasting changes in brain functions and increased risk for mental illness

What are the risks?

You can become dependent.

Individuals who repeatedly use synthetic marijuana can find themselves needing more of the drug to feel any effects. They may notice it takes up more of their attention and energy.

Some of the common warning signs of dependence include:

- Using more or longer than planned
- Feeling anxious, irritable, or unable to sleep without using the drug
- Needing more to get the same effect (tolerance)
- Spending a lot of time thinking about or getting the drug
- Continuing to use despite problems at work, school, or home
- Using in unsafe situations, like before driving

You can overdose.

Because the contents and strength of each batch can be vastly different, overdose from synthetic marijuana can happen suddenly and without warning.

Quitting is worth it.

Benefits start immediately and build over time.

In 1 day blood pressure decreases

In 1-9 months less coughing, easier breathing

In 1 year heart disease risk is cut by half

In 5 years stroke risk is as if you never smoked

In 10 years risk of cancer death is cut in half

Relapse is a normal part of quitting.

Support is available. Keep trying!

There are FDA-approved options like patches, gum, and lozenges to help manage withdrawal.

A smoking cessation counselor can provide guidance and encouragement.

Combining counseling and medication doubles the chance of success.

Connect to Support

Build your QUIT PLAN now.

Free tools, tips, and supports are available.

bewellarkansas.org

1-833-283-9355

smokefree.gov

1-800-662-HELP (4357)

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TOBACCO and nicotine

Care for Yourself, Care for Your Loved Ones



What is tobacco?

Tobacco is a plant containing nicotine, a highly addictive chemical that acts as both a stimulant and a sedative.

Nicotine is smoked in cigarettes and in electronic nicotine delivery systems (ENDS) or vapes, which heat a liquid to create an aerosol. It can also be chewed or sniffed.

How does tobacco affect your body?

In Arkansas, tobacco use is the leading cause of preventable death and disease.



Heart

Forces your heart to work harder with less oxygen



Lungs

Causes smoker's cough, emphysema, and cancer in many parts of the body



Brain

Increases stroke risk; harms adolescent brain development and performance in school and extracurricular activities

Protect your loved ones

Burning tobacco releases over 7,000 chemicals, including carbon monoxide and tar, which are harmful.

Second-hand smoke

Avoid smoking or vaping *around other people.*

Smoke or vapor from your tobacco products can be inhaled by people around you. This raises their risk of heart disease 25%-30%. Children exposed to second-hand smoke have more ear infections and asthma.

Third-hand smoke

Avoid smoking or vaping *in your home or car, even when alone.*

When you smoke tobacco, chemical residue lands on furniture, carpet, and clothing. Other people, especially children, can be exposed to harmful chemicals by touching these surfaces.

Wash hands and change clothes before holding children.

Have a safe pregnancy

Tobacco use during pregnancy restricts oxygen to the fetus. Babies can be born premature or with low weight.

Women who quit using tobacco during the first trimester give birth to infants of comparable weight and height to those of non-smokers.

Mind your oral health

All tobacco products can hurt your oral health. Smoking is associated with severe gum disease and tooth loss. Smokeless tobacco, like dip or chew, can cause permanent gum recession and bone loss around the teeth.

Get regular dental check-ups to catch problems early!

Good Samaritan Law

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U-47700
"PINK"

A hazardous opioid drug



What is U-47700?

U-47700 is a very strong opioid that is made in labs and has never been tested on humans. It is sometimes called “Pink,” “Pinky,” “U4,” or “fake morphine.”

U-47700 has become easily accessible on the dark web and is illicitly marketed as a “research chemical” or “legal opioid” under the name “Doxylam.”

It usually comes in tablets or as a white or pink powder. It is sometimes mixed into other drugs or sold as fake pain pills.

How is U-47700 used?

U-47700 can be swallowed, snorted, or injected. Individuals who take it may not even know it has been mixed into the substance they are taking.

How does it affect the body?

U-47700 is a very strong and unpredictable opioid drug. Here are some of the ways it can affect your body and brain:



Brain

You may experience euphoria, psychosis, drowsiness, confusion, or even seizures.



Heart

You can have low oxygen levels in your blood, which can cause your skin to turn blue and lead to serious heart problems.



Lungs

Your breathing can slow down enough to be life-threatening.



Stomach

You can experience constipation, nausea, or vomiting.



Skin

Your skin can feel very itchy.



Eyes

Your pupils can become very small or “pinpoint.”

Using U-47700 is risky.

You can become dependent.

People who use U-47700 can become dependent on it very quickly.

You can overdose.

U-47700 is up to 12 times more potent than morphine. It is very unpredictable and dangerous—even small amounts can cause fatal overdose.

Prevent fatal overdose!

Carry an opioid overdose reversal medication (OORM), such as naloxone, which is available over the counter.

Watch for signs of overdose:

- Loss of consciousness
- Slow or irregular breathing or heartbeat
- Snoring or gurgling
- Cold or clammy skin
- Pinpoint pupils
- Blue lips or fingernails

In case of overdose, call 911 first, then administer an OORM.

When to Seek Help

You feel strong cravings or need to vape often.

You use both cigarettes and vapes instead of quitting smoking.

You try to quit but cannot.

You notice chest pain, shortness of breath, or fainting.

Family or friends express concern.

You feel irritable, anxious, or restless without it.

You hide your use or feel guilty about it.

Talk to someone you trust or get free, confidential coaching:

Text QUITNOW to 333888

Download the quitSTART app

Call 800-QUIT-NOW

Connect to Support

Treatment is available for all kinds of substance use disorders. Contact your healthcare provider for assistance.

findtreatment.gov

1-800-662-HELP (4357)

Connect to organizations dedicated to prevention, treatment, and recovery in Arkansas through the Office of Substance Abuse and Mental Health.

DHS | Office of Substance Abuse and Mental Health

VAPING
(e-cigarettes)

Not a safe alternative



What is vaping?

Vaping means using a vaping device, also called an e-cigarette, which heats a liquid into an aerosol you breathe in.

Vaping liquids usually contain nicotine in differing doses.

Vapes are falsely marketed as safer than cigarettes.

Vaping is especially common among teens and young adults. In 2024, more than 20% of 12th graders in Arkansas reported vaping at least once.

How are vapes used?

People vape in different ways.

Vaping liquid comes in pods, pens, and refillable tanks.

The vaping device heats the liquid into a vapor that the user breathes in, similar to inhaling the smoke from a cigarette.

Some vaping liquids contain nicotine salts, a form of nicotine that is smoother and easier to inhale. This can lead to dependence on nicotine.

How does vaping affect your body?

When you vape, nicotine enters your body and quickly affects several major organs and systems.

Here's what that can feel like in the short term:



You can feel more alert and energetic.

You can feel dizzy.



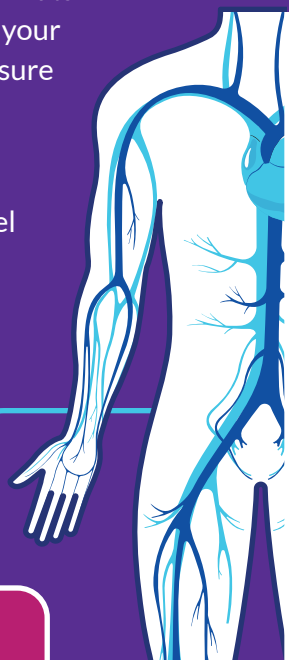
Your throat and lungs can feel irritated, and you may cough.



Your heart beats faster, and your blood pressure increases.



You can feel nauseous.



What are the risks of vaping?

It can change how your brain develops.

Vaping can make it harder to focus, to learn, and to manage emotions. These changes happen faster for teens than for adults.

It can affect your ability to do activities you love.

For example, vaping can hurt your performance in sports, dance, or playing an instrument.

You can have serious health problems later in life.

Over the long term, vaping can raise your risk of having lung and heart problems. It can also result in a potentially fatal illness referred to as e-cigarette or vaping use-associated lung injury (EVALI).

Good Samaritan Law

The Joshua Ashley-Pauley Act in Arkansas protects individuals involved in a drug overdose rescue.

Neither the person who experiences an overdose nor the person calling for medical help will be arrested, charged, or prosecuted for possessing illicit substances.

Treatment & Recovery

Effective treatment options available in Arkansas include:

- Withdrawal management
- Medication-assisted treatment
- Residential care
- Individual and group counseling

Recovery options available in Arkansas include:

- Certified peer specialists who have lived experience with substance use and recovery
- Recovery community organizations
- Recovery residences
- Support groups, like Narcotics Anonymous

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XYLAZINE

Facts about "tranq"



What is xylazine?

Xylazine is a tranquilizer that veterinarians use on large animals. It is not safe for humans.

It is often mixed with fentanyl, heroin, or cocaine before it is sold to individuals.

Xylazine, sometimes called "tranq," is not an opioid, but it has similar effects.

How is xylazine used?

Xylazine is usually injected, but it can also be swallowed, snorted, or inhaled.

People who take xylazine might not even know it has been mixed into the substance they are taking.

How does xylazine affect the body?

Xylazine affects many of your body's important functions by slowing down your central nervous system. Here is what that can look like:

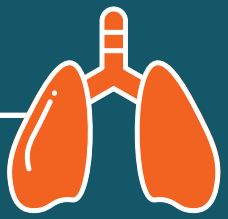
Brain
You can feel very sleepy.





Heart
Your heart can beat very slowly, and your blood pressure can drop dangerously low.

Lungs
You can have a very hard time breathing, or breathe very slowly.





Skin
Injecting can cause serious, painful injuries around the injection site.

Using xylazine is risky.

You can overdose. Overdoses can lead to permanent organ damage or death.

You can get serious wounds. If you inject xylazine, you can develop injuries to your skin and the tissue around where you injected. These wounds are worse than with other drug injections. They can become badly infected. If they are not treated, the affected body part may have to be amputated.

Overdose Response

Carry an opioid overdose reversal medication (OORM), such as naloxone, which is available over the counter.

In case of overdose, call 911 first, then administer an OORM.

Signs of overdose can include:

- unconsciousness
- irregular breathing or heartbeat
- snoring or gurgling
- cold or clammy skin
- pinpoint pupils
- blue lips or fingernails