

What are the risks?

Using Crack has a number of different risks

Psychological:

- Paranoia
- Angry and hostile
- Psychosis including hallucinations, or paranoid delusions
- False sense of power and control
- Depression
- Social isolation
- Dependency and addiction
- Suicidal thoughts
- Intense euphoria
- Relapse of mental health conditions
- Impact on mental well-being
- Vertigo
- Hallucinations

Physical:

- Blisters on lips and mouth
- Poor appetite, malnutrition, weight loss
- Disturbed sleep patterns
- Increased heart rate
- Muscle spasms and convulsions
- Higher risk of heart attack, seizure and stroke
- Sudden death
- Risk of blood borne viruses
- Rise in body temperature and blood pressure
- Muscle tension
- Decreased sexual function
- Nausea
- Liver damage

Did you know?

Allowing other people to supply drugs in your house or any other premises is illegal

Crack and the law

Crack is a class A drug. It is illegal to have, give away or sell.

Possession can get seven years in jail and supply can get you life or an unlimited fine.

A drug related conviction can effect what jobs you apply for and can stop you from travelling to certain countries.

Driving when high is illegal. You can be unfit to drive the day after using crack, resulting in a fine, disqualification from driving or face prison.

Find out more

If you would like more information or support on crack or you are affected by someone else's use please contact us at Inclusion Recovery Hampshire.

Information is also available at:

NHS Website: www.nhs.uk

Talk to Frank Website: www.talktofrank.com

HOW TO CONTACT US

NORTH: 01782 639856
StarsNorth@mpft.nhs.uk

EAST: 01283 741053
StarsEast@mpft.nhs.uk

WEST: 01785 270080
StarsWest@mpft.nhs.uk

Or visit: www.staffstars.org

You. Me. Us

This leaflet was created by:  **inclusion** Part of Midlands Partnership University NHS Foundation Trust Find out more at www.inclusion.org

Crack

What you need to know!



 STaRS

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What is crack?

Crack cocaine, is a potent stimulant and crystal form of cocaine.

- Made from cocaine.
- Small lumps or rocks that make a cracking noise when burnt.
- Crack, the most potent form in which cocaine appears, is also the riskiest. It is between 75% and 100% pure, far stronger and more potent than regular cocaine.
- Because of cocaine's high cost, it has long been considered a 'rich-man's drug'. Crack, on the other hand, is sold at low prices. However, once a person is addicted, the expense sky-rocketed in direct ratio to the increasing amount needed to support the habit.

The myths

- Crack helps you maintain your weight
- It takes a long time to get hooked on crack
- You cannot overdose on crack
- Crack cocaine is more potent than cocaine

What is true is crack is the most riskiest form of cocaine due to the nature in which it's used.

How is crack taken?

Crack is heated and smoked. It is so named because it makes a cracking or popping sound when heated.

Crack can be smoked through a glass pipe, water bottle or in tin foil this is known as freebasing. When using this method it reaches the brain quickly and in turn brings an immediate potent effect - though this is short lived.

Some users report to snorting crack, although this is not very common it carries its own high risks.

It can be prepared to make a solution for injecting.

Some users mix crack cocaine with Heroin and inject them at the same time. This is known as snowballing or speed-balling and can be fatal.

Sharing needles and syringes or other injecting equipment, when injecting, runs the risk of the injector catching or spreading HIV and hepatitis C infection. There is also the risk that veins may be damaged and or an abscess or blood clot developing.

What does it look like?

Crack is the crystal form of cocaine. After a process, small rocks are formed about the size of raisins that are sometimes flaky in appearance.

It comes in solid blocks or crystals varying in colour from yellow, pale pink and most commonly found off-white. Colour variation can be related to the addition of other substances.

In its purer form it resembles a hard brittle plastic.

Often you will find that extra additives have been added to increase the potency of the drug or a synthetic substance added to mimic the effects.

Smoking crack allows it to reach the brain more quickly than injecting it bringing an intense and immediate - but very short lived - high that lasts about fifteen minutes. Addiction can develop very quickly.



What are the effects?

Crack is a stimulant drug which is highly addictive. Effects can be pleasant and unpleasant:

- Feelings of alertness followed by a sense of well-being
- Increased levels of dopamine cause intense rush and feelings of pleasure
- Powerful high which when subsides can leave you feeling down
- Feelings of confidence, alert and awake
- Users can feel agitated or hyperactive
- Paranoia
- Increased heart rate and pulse
- Jaw clenching
- Be unnaturally animated
- Reduced appetite
- Increase in body temperature
- Long feelings of 'come down' or 'crash'
- Strong impulse to use more