Sundhedsstyrelsen
National Board of Health

DRUGS

HOW DO THEY WORK
AND WHAT DO THEY LOOK LIKE

DRUGS
WHAT DO YOU KNOW

HOW MANY PEOPLE TRY DRUGS

There are many myths about young people and drugs. You have probably heard in the media that many young people take far too many drugs. Maybe you have come across drugs among your friends or when you have been on a night out.

Many young people are offered drugs. About 40% of young people in Denmark aged 16-20 have tried smoking cannabis and about 10% have tried one or more illegal substances. So far from everyone is involved in drugs. Most people who have tried drugs only try it once or twice.

WHERE ARE DRUGS SOLD

You may be offered drugs in many places – at private parties, when you are on a night out or on the street. But it is more likely that you will be offered drugs by a friend than by a criminal who is not known to you or

by a pusher. Regardless of where the drugs come from, they are still illegal and you will be punished in accordance with Danish law for the possession of drugs.

HOW DANGEROUS ARE DRUGS

Drugs always pose a risk. It is just as dangerous to take drugs on a Monday as it is on a Saturday when you are on a night out. All drugs can give you a really bad experience. You may physically and mentally unwell, e.g. vomiting or panic attacks. In addition, you may be seriously injured in accidents or in traffic because your judgement, your reactions and movements are impaired. Most drugs may have a serious effect – and many of the drugs can kill you. So drugs always pose an acute risk – also if you are taking them for the first time.

HOW IS YOUR BRAIN AFFECTED

The brain governs our senses, actions, thoughts, needs and feelings – the conscious as well as the unconscious ones. A special area of the brain contains the reward system which makes you happy and satisfied when, for example, you have just eaten, drunk or had sex. This is the system which ensures that you learn to do things that make you happy. It is this reward system which is chemically stimulated by drugs and governs addiction.

Drugs mainly affect the brain and the central nervous system which only becomes fully developed when you reach adulthood. This is why it is easier to become addicted when you are young. As a young person, you will also find it much more difficult to manage being high, your body will feel the euphoric effect much faster, and you will become more accident-prone.

All this depends on how particularly your body and your brain react, which again depends on the individual taking the drug. Another important factor is the surroundings – silence, noise, security or agitation will affect you in different ways.

HOW MUCH DO YOU KNOW ABOUT DRUGS

If you come across drugs, you should know something about them in advance. This guide tells you all about drugs and their effects, what they look like and what you can do to take care of yourself and your friends.

WHAT TYPES OF DRUGS ARE THERE

On the following pages you will find information about the most common (illegal) drugs. The drugs have been divided into three groups characterised by effect: sedative drugs, stimulants and hallucinogens.

Some drugs are 100% chemically synthesized while others are primarily made from plants. The presence of natural ingredients in a drug does not reduce the risk. Many drugs which are 'natural' in origin are very dangerous. Tests also show that there is a great difference in the quantity of active substances in illegal drugs. Don't rely on any information you are given about the drug's ingredients. The fact is that you can never be sure of what an illegal drug contains.

HOW ILLEGAL ARE DRUGS

According to the Danish Euporiants Act, the import, export, sale, purchase, receipt, production, preparation and possession of drugs are illegal unless they are used for medicinal or for research purposes. Any violation of these laws will be punished with a fine or up to 16 years' imprisonment, depending on how serious the violation is.

CONTENTS

ICON KEY

For clarity sake the following icons are used to explain the different drugs:


Prevalence


Injected


Smoked


High


Sniffed

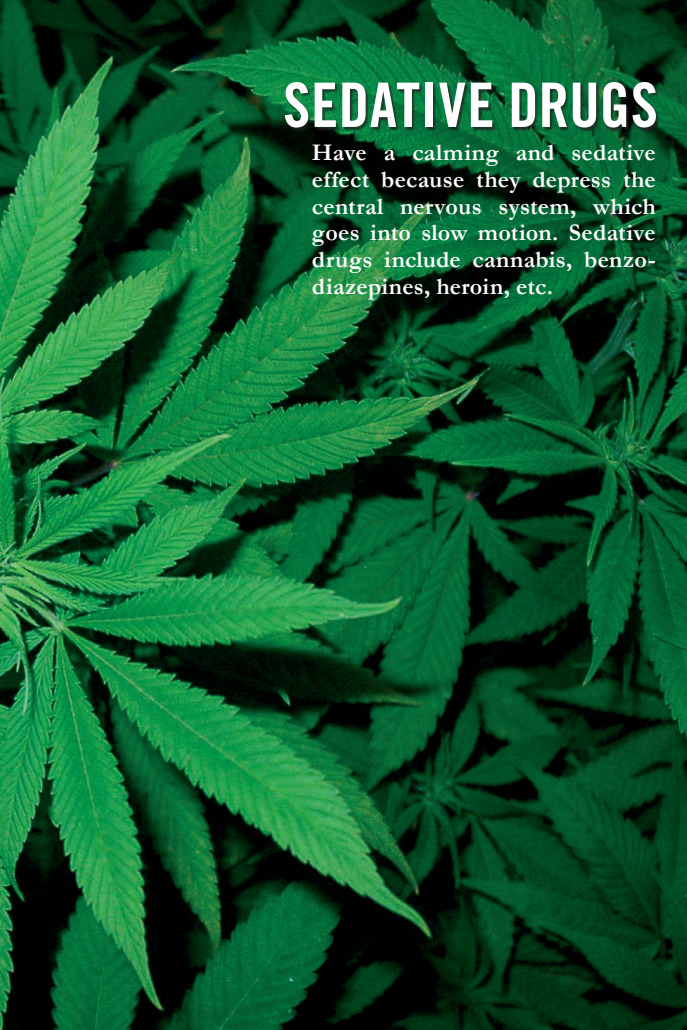

Aggression


Drunk


Anxiety


Eaten

Poisoning



SEDATIVE DRUGS

Have a calming and sedative effect because they depress the central nervous system, which goes into slow motion. Sedative drugs include cannabis, benzodiazepines, heroin, etc.

SUBSTANCE

Cannabis stems from the hemp plant Cannabis Sativa and the various forms of cannabis (e.g. grass, marihuana/pot, skunk) may contain different concentrations of the active ingredient THC. Skunk is often several times more potent than cannabis and pot.

EFFECT

Cannabis has a sedative effect and in large doses it may also be hallucinogenic. When cannabis is smoked, the effect sets in within a few minutes, and when taken orally, after one hour. The user feels palpitations, dryness of the eyes and mouth, light dizziness and possibly nausea. He/she becomes elated and relaxed, but may also experience unpleasant panic attacks. Time slows down, light and sound are experienced differently, often more intensely – large doses may produce actual hallucinations. First-time users are particularly at risk of strong

panic attacks. The risk of experiencing anxiety increases by dosage strength. The affected person may have reddened eyes, slurry speech, slow movements, giggle fits and demonstrate extrovert or introvert behaviour.

After the high, the user feels fatigue, lack of initiative and has difficulty concentrating. Cannabis reduces the ability to coordinate movement, solve complex tasks and acquire new knowledge for up to 24 hours. Cannabis can be traced in urine tests for 4-8 weeks after intake.

OVERDOSE

An overdose of cannabis produces psychological symptoms such as panic attacks or psychotic behaviour, i.e. you have a distorted perception of reality and cannot distinguish between fantasy and reality. However, there is no risk of dying from a cannabis overdose.

ADDICTION

Cannabis is addictive. After a short period of frequent use – e.g. every day for a week – the body will crave for more to achieve the same effect. When stopping after approximately one month's frequent use, the user will feel unwell.

WITHDRAWAL SYMPTOMS

Symptoms are sleeplessness, night sweats, anxiety,

irritation, restlessness, difficulty concentrating and bad moods. These symptoms may last for several weeks, but will improve after about 10 days.

OTHER SIDE EFFECTS

Cannabis reduces attention and the ability to coordinate. Regular use of cannabis produces drowsiness, slowness and indifference, loss of initiative and concentration. Some people become depressed. The user's learning and problem-solving abilities deteriorate. Many young people who are heavy cannabis users 'come to a stand-still' in their personal development and social lives.

Cannabis may also trigger and worsen psychosis and depression. Regular smoking of cannabis harms the airways and lungs even more than tobacco. In the long-term, it may produce bronchitis, 'smoker's lungs' and increase the risk of various forms of cancer.

MIXING DRUGS

The sedative effect of cannabis is enhanced if cannabis is taken in combination with tranquillizers or sleeping pills, alcohol, heroin or other sedative substances which increases the risk of accidents. The combination of cannabis and hallucinogens renders the hallucinogenic effect even more unpredictable, and in turn increases the risk of mental injury.

7%

SUBSTANCE

Benzodiazepines are a group of drugs with a common chemical compound which is used to medicate anxiety and sleep disturbances. These pills have many names, e.g. Rohypnol and Stesolid. The pills are produced by the pharmaceutical industry as well as by illegal drug laboratories. When used for producing a high, benzodiazepines are most often taken with alcohol and/or other illegal drugs.

EFFECT

Benzodiazepines have a calming, sedative and sleep-provoking effect – similar to that of alcohol. In some cases, the drugs have the opposite effect and you become hyperactive, chaotic, restless, erratic and often aggressive.

OVERDOSE

When used as prescribed by a doctor, benzodiazepines are a relatively non-toxic type of medication. However, benzodiazepines enhance the effects of alcohol, heroin and other drugs depressing the central nervous system, and at worst, an overdose may result in death due to respiratory arrest.

ADDICTION

Benzodiazepines are addictive meaning that an increase in dosage is needed to achieve the same effect.

WITHDRAWAL SYMPTOMS

Anxiety, restlessness, insomnia and at worst, seizures. Withdrawal symptoms can be treated medically.

OTHER SIDE EFFECTS

Risk of accidents increases if benzodiazepines are taken together with alcohol or other sedative drugs.

MIXING DRUGS

Mixing benzodiazepines and alcohol may trigger strong aggression and violence. Benzodiazepines are often taken after the use of stimulants (cocaine and ecstasy) as a relaxant or sleeping remedy. The user risks developing what is referred to as "polydrug use".

SUBSTANCE

Heroin, morphine, codeine and opium are drugs synthesized from the extract of the opium poppy. Similar drugs can be produced synthetically, e.g. methadone. Collectively these drugs are called opioids. Heroin most commonly comes as a white or brown powder.

EFFECT

Heroin gives a short rush and then a relaxing high where pain and problems fade into a feeling of happy indifference. The effect comes very quickly. The drugs have a strong analgesic effect, but also depress the central nervous system in other ways. Large doses produce constipation, inhibit breathing and the pupils contract. Effects include slowness, drowsiness, slurry speech, staggering, nausea and shivers.

OVERDOSE

Heroin and morphine depress the respiratory centre in the brain. An overdose will produce slow and superficial breathing, which in the end may lead to respiratory arrest and death.

ADDICTION

The body quickly gets used to heroin. After only a few days' use, an increase in dose is requiredto achieve the same effect. Addicts are therefore able to tolerate doses which would be deadly to others.

WITHDRAWAL SYMPTOMS

Shivering, sweating, muscle pain, nausea, insomnia, etc. which may be similar to influenza symptoms. Then comes a long period of fatigue, irritability, apathy as well as lack of desire, depression and craving for drugs.

OTHER SIDE EFFECTS

Life as a heroin addict is self-destructive and a great strain and you often become depressed. When the drug is injected intravenously, there is a great risk of damage to the blood vessels and serious contagious disease (liver infection, HIV/AIDS, heart valve infection, etc.) if you share needles or 'tools' with others.

MIXING DRUGS

Most heroin addicts (or addicts taking other opioids) are polydrug users with alcohol, benzodiazepines, cannabis, amphetamines and cocaine forming part of their drug abuse.

SUBSTANCE

Some chemical substances have a strong euphoric effect when inhaled. These include organic solvents and certain gasses from aerosols. These are substances which come in everyday products such as lighter fuel, petrol, some types of glue, some types of paint and some products found in aerosols. These products are typically labelled as flammable and dangerous to health and the risk of using them is great.

EFFECT

Sniffing may cause a high similar to the effects of alcohol. The chemical substances depress the central nervous system and cause the user to become dizzy, staggering, elated and rambling. Some people become aggressive. Large doses may produce hallucinations, resulting in severe hangovers, fatigue, drowsiness,

headaches, nausea and vomiting. It is also common to experience disturbed sleep and nightmares.

When sniffing, an individual may have a permanent cough, running eyes and nose (similar to a cold), a permanent blush, blisters around the mouth and nose, fatigue, headache and loss of appetite.

OVERDOSE

There is a great risk of an overdose resulting in death. Sniffing affects the respiratory centre and obstructs breathing. This may result in respiratory arrest. In addition, sniffing has an adverse effect on the heart rate and may produce sudden heart failure. There is a very fine line between the dose required to induce euhoria and the dose leading to an overdose.

ADDICTION

Sniffing is likely to cause addiction.

WITHDRAWAL SYMPTOMS

Headache, stomach pain, muscle cramps.

OTHER SIDE EFFECTS

There is a great risk of fire accidents if the user strikes a match or a lighter to smoke, as the fumes

are extremely flammable. There is also a risk of other accidents as the high inhibits judgement and makes movement very unsteady.

Long-term use may be a serious risk to a person's health. Brain tissue is damaged whereby memory and learning abilities are reduced. Emotional reactions change, and kidneys, liver and bone marrow may suffer damage. Certain substances, among them petrol, are also carcinogenic.

MIXING DRUGS

If sniffing is combined with alcohol, transquillizers/sleeping pills or other drugs, the effect is often completely unpredictable and the risks even greater.

THE RISK OF A SERIOUS OVERDOSE INCREASES IF THERE IS ONLY A FINE LINE BETWEEN THE DOSE REQUIRED TO INDUCE EUPHORIA AND THE DOSE LEADING TO AN OVERDOSE.

SUBSTANCE

GHB comes as a colourless liquid, as powder or as capsules. It is often called 'fantasy' or liquid ecstasy which is a misnomer as the drug – as opposed to ecstasy – has a sedative effect.

EFFECT

In small doses, GHB may have a relaxant effect, but may also cause amnesia and drowsiness. In larger doses it is extremely sedative and sleep-provoking and may produce a confused and groggy state in the user. GHB may also cause sudden loss of consciousness.

OVERDOSE

The risk of a serious or lethal overdose from GHB is great, particularly if it is taken together with alcohol or other sedative drugs, which is a common phenomenon among users. GHB is dangerous

because overdosing is easy. There is only a fine line between the dose inducing euphoria and the dose causing an overdose.

ADDICTION

GHB is likely to cause addiction.

MIXING DRUGS

It is common to take GHB together with alcohol, although this combination is known to be risky.


GHB

STIMULANTS

Have a stimulating effect because the central nervous system is given a serious boost. Stimulants include amphetamine, cocaine, ecstasy, etc.

36%

3-4 hours

SUBSTANCE

Amphetamines are chemically produced and come as powder or pills. Many kinds of pills produced in illegal laboratories are based on the chemical structure of amphetamine. Methamphetamine is a type which is 3-5 times as potent as amphetamine and comes as powder, pills or crystals.

EFFECT

Amphetamines have a stimulating effect on the central nervous system. As a result, they create a feeling of energy, exhilaration and self-confidence. The user becomes very active, restless, extrovert, self-centred and talkative. The bounds of normal behaviour are exceeded and the individual may experience facial and bodily twitching. The irritability and anger thresholds are low. Amphetamines suppress the body's natural signals whereby hunger, thirst and

fatigue disappear. After the euphoric effect has worn off, the user becomes despondent, anxious, tired and exhausted. Nevertheless it may be difficult to calm down enough to sleep.

OVERDOSE

Amphetamines may cause an overdose. The symptoms are headache, dizziness, nausea, fever and seizures.

ADDICTION

The body gets used to amphetamines and requires more of the substance to produce the same euphoric effect.

WITHDRAWAL SYMPTOMS

Anxiety, restlessness, agitation, depression, suspicion and aggression. The user also experiences severe depression with the risk of becoming suicidal.

OTHER SIDE EFFECTS

Someone who is under the influence of amphetamines has a 'short fuse' and there is a risk of violence. When taken several times at short intervals, amphetamines may cause anxiety and paranoia. Long-term use may cause the development of an amphetamine psychosis with the user being unable to differentiate between reality and fantasy. The user develops symptoms of

paranoia and becomes a hazard to him/herself and others. Amphetamine psychosis requires psychiatric treatment.

MIXING DRUGS

Amphetamines reduces the user's sense of alcohol tolerance and leads to the two drugs being used in combination. However, alcohol and amphetamines are counteractive and the mix produces an unpredictable effect with a great risk of aggressive and violent behaviour. It is tempting to relieve the discomfort of the comedown with sedative substances (e.g. cannabis, tranquillizers/sleeping medication, opioids). This means that amphetamine use often leads to polydrug use.

DON'T RELY ON ANY INFORMATION YOU ARE GIVEN ABOUT THE DRUG'S INGREDIENTS. THE FACT IS THAT YOU CAN NEVER BE SURE OF WHAT AN ILLEGAL DRUG CONTAINS.

SUBSTANCE

Cocaine is extracted from the leaves of the coca plant. Cocaine is typically taken as a white powder, but also comes as 'crack', a basic form of cocaine in white, greyish or brownish lumps or flakes.

EFFECT

Cocaine has a stimulating effect on the central nervous system. Pulse and respiratory rate increase, blood pressure increases and body temperature rises. This gives a feeling of energy, exhilaration and self-confidence. Hunger, thirst and fatigue are no longer felt. A person under the influence of cocaine seems self-centred and hyperactive, the pupils are dilated and the muscles tense. The euphoric effect is short-lasting. The user comes down after about an hour, becomes exhausted, irritable, nervous, restless, introvert, depressed and feels a heavy craving for the substance. This leads to taking cocaine several times

in quick succession and the risk of severe overdosing thereby increases.

OVERDOSE

Cocaine may cause a serious overdose with seizures, respiratory and heart failure. Signs of a cocaine overdose include strong restlessness and dilated pupils, racing pulse, rapid breathing and increase in body temperature. Seizures and unconsciousness may follow. The risk of an overdose is even greater in large doses and repeated use in quick succession.

ADDICTION

Cocaine is highly addictive. The fast ups and downs tempt you to take more cocaine so it is easy to end up with uncontrolled abuse.

WITHDRAWAL SYMPTOMS

Come in the shape of very long coming downs with sleep disturbances, lack of energy, depression, irritability, lack of libido and a strong craving for the substance. The user may also experience depression with a risk of becoming suicidal.

OTHER SIDE EFFECTS

The person under the influence of cocaine easily flares up and gets angry and there is an increased risk of

violence. While the use of cocaine initially stimulates the desire for sex, regular cocaine use reduces libido. Cocaine reduces the blood supply to the brain and heart and may therefore cause brain damage, heart complications, arrhythmia, heart failure and respiratory distress. Cocaine that is sniffed may cause nosebleeds and over time destroy the mucous membranes of the nose. Serious psychological symptoms such as morbid suspicion, anxiety, tension and depression may develop. At the same time, there is a risk of developing a cocaine psychosis which is characterised by delusions (paranoia and similar reactions), hallucinations and anxiety. A cocaine psychosis may last several weeks and requires psychiatric treatment.

MIXING DRUGS

Users are tempted to alleviate their anxiety and agitation of the coming downs with sedative substances such as alcohol, benzodiazepines, heroin, etc. and thereby develop polydrug use.

ALTHOUGH MANY DRUGS DERIVE FROM A NATURAL SOURCE, THEY ARE EQUALLY AS TOXIC AS THE SYNTHETIC DRUGS

SUBSTANCE

Ecstasy is the popular name for the synthetic substance MDMA which is available as powder in gelatine capsules or as pills of varying shape and colours with different logos. The concentration of active ingredients differs widely – concentrations from 1-53% MDMA have been found in ecstasy pills. There may also be several other active ingredients in the pills, typically other stimulants and even hallucinogenic substances, some of them more toxic than MDMA.

EFFECT

Ecstasy has a stimulating and slightly hallucinogenic effect. There is no sense of fatigue, however there is a transfixion on sound and light. Users will often experience feelings of openness and affection. They feel very thirsty and may experience nausea, muscle tension (especially the jaw muscles), shivers, sweating and

palpitations. High doses may lead to serious bodily symptoms such as dehydration, drastically increased body temperature, arrhythmia, high blood pressure, bleeding, and kidney failure. In the days following the high, the user will typically be exhausted and depressed. This partly follows from the substance itself and from putting the body under such strain while in the euphoric state.

OVERDOSE

Overdosing from ecstasy is relatively rare, but may be fatal and there are examples of death occurring even after small doses. The symptoms may be fever, hypertension, seizures, confusion and loss of consciousness. A person under the influence of ecstasy with symptoms of hyperthermia must immediately be cooled down (cool room, cold water to drink and splashed on the body) and be taken to the emergency award.

ADDICTION

Ecstasy is addictive. Long-term use leads to a craving for larger doses to achieve the same effect. Side effects are increased dramatically with large doses.

OTHER SIDE EFFECTS

Users may experience a bad trip with frightening hallucinations, confusion and panic as well as flash-

backs months after taking ecstasy. In addition to changes to the central nervous system, ecstasy may damage the heart, kidneys and liver.

MIXING DRUGS

Alcohol and ecstasy are counteractive and when combined produce unpredictable efffects.

4 hours

SUBSTANCE

The fresh leaves and stalks from the khat plant, which is cultivated in Africa, contain the psychoactive substances cathinone and cathine. The shoots of the plant are imported and sold in bunches. Khat is most often taken through prolonged chewing, but can also be drunk as an extract or smoked.

EFFECT

Khat has to be chewed for a long time and the effect presents itself slowly (after approx. 1.5 hours). Khat has a stimulating effect. You feel energetic, want to talk and become more extrovert, but also more irritable. Hunger and thirst are not felt. Blood pressure and heart rhythm are increased and pupils dilate. After-effects are drowsiness and depression.

OVERDOSE

Overdose does occur and produces psychological symptoms in particular, but no fatal outcomes have been reported.

ADDICTION

Khat is moderately addictive.

WITHDRAWAL SYMPTOMS

Anxiety, restlessness, agitation, depression, suspicion and aggression.

SIDE EFFECTS

Regular use of khat may produce sleeping problems, loss of appetite and mood swings. The khat chewer may become irritable and aggressive with some risk of violence. In some cases khat may produce actual anxiety attacks or psychosis with hallucinations. Khat chewing may produce irritation and infection of the oral cavity, oesophagus and stomach and discolouration of the teeth.

SUBSTANCE

Poppers is a popular expression for amyl nitrate, etc. These substances come as a yellowish, highly evaporative liquid and are sold in small bottles. The user opens the container and sniffs the vapours.

EFFECT

Poppers expand the blood vessels and produce a minute-long euphoria, a "rushing" feeling in the head and relaxation of the muscles. Poppers are used to increase the feeling of pleasure during intercourse. Following the instantaneous effect, the user may experience a severe headache and feel unwell and weak. The substance may produce a fall in blood pressure and fainting.

OVERDOSE

When consumed as a drink, poppers may cause a serious overdose with oxygen not being distributed in the blood, which may become life-threatening. If unconscious, the affected person must be taken to the emergency ward. If the substance has been sniffed, the risk is lower.

OTHER SIDE EFFECTS

Poppers are flammable and the liquid severely irritates the skin.

MIXING DRUGS

It is particularly dangerous to combine poppers and Viagra or hypertension medication as blood pressure will drop to a critical low.

HALLUCINOGENS

A hallucination is a sensory experience of something that does not exist outside the mind. It may involve hearing or seeing something that isn't really there. This group includes psilocybin mushrooms and LSD.

SUBSTANCE

Hallucinogens are the generic name for a very wide range of different substances. Some are chemically produced (e.g. LSD) and others are found in plants, e.g. psilocybin in mushrooms.

EFFECT

The hallucinogens produce intoxication with a strong distortion of sensory impressions, thoughts and mood, i.e. a condition similar to psychosis. Sensory impressions are distorted, unstable and intrusive. Body perception changes, thoughts are interrupted, anxiety and happiness occur simultaneously. The user will often experience nausea and become sleepy at the start of the high. There is also a small rise in body temperature, pulse rate and blood pressure. Pupils are dilated. Intoxication comes 30-60 minutes after taking the substance. The duration of intoxication de-

pends on what type of hallucinogen you have taken. In some cases intoxication lasts a long time in a nightmarish way – the so-called 'bad trips'. Experiences of the high may also return in the form of flashbacks a long time after someone has taken hallucinogenic substances. Both bad trips and flashbacks are experienced as very unpleasant.

OVERDOSE

Dosage depends on the substance – LSD is taken in micrograms, while mushrooms are eaten several grams at a time. In all cases overdoses increase the risk of panic, etc. If anxiety and confusion occur, it is important to place the individual in calm surroundings. If a seriously bad trip occurs, the person should be taken to the emergency ward as there may be a need for sedative treatment. Very high doses may cause a life-threatening situation with racing pulse and body temperature increasing, in which case the person should be take to the emergency ward immediately.

ADDICTION

Regular use of hallucinogens leads to a craving for larger and larger doses to achieve the same effect.

OTHER SIDE EFFECTS

Hallucinogens present a great risk of accidents such as fatal falls and suicide as the user's perception of reality becomes distorted. Anxiety, panic and aggression may occur as a result of these fantasies. First and foremost, users of hallucinogenic substances risk psychosis accompanied by paranoia. In most cases, the psychosis will be temporary and last a few days, but in a few cases the psychosis may last longer. A psychotic condition requires medical treatment.

MIXING DRUGS

Hallucinogenic substances are often used by young people who have also experienced stimulants and cannabis. Using several substances at once increases the risk of an overdose and completely uncontrolled trips.

SUBSTANCES AND ALCOHOL IN COMBINATION CAN HARM A FOETUS. SO IF YOU ARE PREGNANT OR ARE CONSIDERING GETTING PREGNANT, STAY AWAY

TAKE CARE OF
YOURSELF AND YOUR FRIENDS

Substances are surrounded by many risks. This means that it is important to take care of yourself, your friends and others who may be under the influence of drugs. If you see someone who is depressed, ill or afraid, it is important not to panic, but to try to help the person who is under the influence of drugs or to call for help. When you are under the influence of drugs, you do not react as you usually would. Therefore you must be prepared for the fact that such a person may react violently to the drug he/she has taken. So it is important that you are able to interpret the person's behaviour and symptoms and provide help accordingly:

PANICKY AND CONFUSED

- Calm down the person and tell him/her that you want to help
- Lead the person away from noise and strong light
- Make the person breathe calmly by following your breathing
- Explain quietly and calmly what is happening and what you are doing to help

Especially hallucinogens, ecstasy or large amounts of cannabis may induce panic and confusion in the user.

OVERSTRUNG AND AGGRESSIVE

- Calm down the person, speak slowly, be patient, avoid confrontation, discussion and keep a calm dialogue going
- Touch the person as little as possible. Be aware that the person has a low aggression threshold
- Lead the person away from noise and strong light
- Make the person breathe calmly by following your breathing
- Offer the person water
- Explain quietly and calmly what is happening and what you are doing to help

Especially cocaine and amphetamine may make the user overstrung and aggressive. But this is also seen with alcohol, other substances and polydrug use.

HYPERTHERMIC AND HYPERACTIVE

- Lead the person away to a cool place and offer him/her water
- Cool down the person by splashing cold water on his/her body
- Let the person stand with his/her forearms in cold water, if possible
- Investigate whether the person has danced intensely for a long time
- Call the emergency services on 112

Especially ecstasy, but also hallucinogens, may cause the user to become hyperthermic and hyperactive.

ABSENT AND ANAESTHETISED

- Keep the person conscious – do not let the person lie down and go to sleep
- Avoid liquid and food as the person may choke
- Call the emergency services on 112

Particularly alcohol and the other sedative intoxicants may make the user seem absent and anesthetised.

UNCONSCIOUS

- Call the emergency services on 112 and give them all the details you can about the situation
- Check the person's breathing and ensure that the airways are not obstructed
- Give mouth-to-mouth, if required
- Put the person in the recovery position and loosen any tight clothing
- Keep the person warm with a blanket or similar, but also be aware of overheating

Particularly alcohol and the other sedative drugs may cause unconsciousness – but this may also occur with overdoses resulting from cocaine, ecstasy, poppers and polydrug use.

YOU CAN GET HELP HERE

IF YOU ARE AT A FESTIVAL:

Contact the Samaritans.
They are there to help.

IF YOU NEED HELP WITH DRUG PROBLEMS:

Contact your municipal case officer or general practitioner.

IF YOU WANT TO KNOW MORE, VISIT:

www.sst.dk/narkotika and www.netstof.dk

3rd edition, 1st issue 2007

www.sst.dk