

DRUGS AROUND US



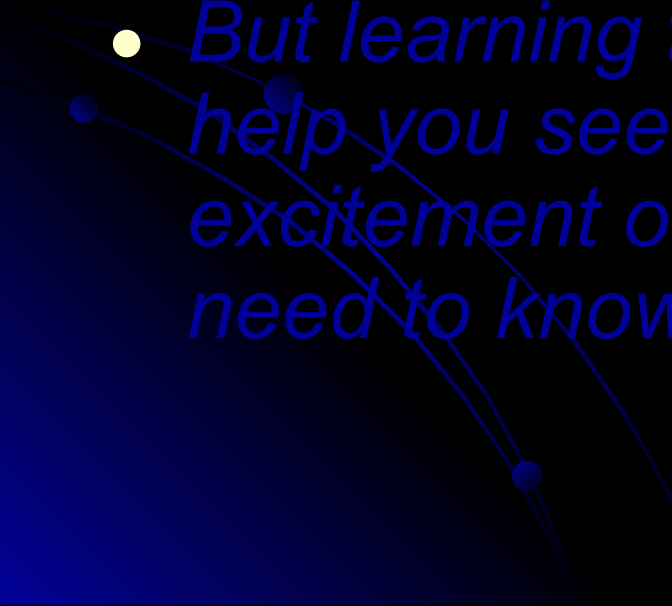
If Drugs are the Answer...



What was the Question?

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Drugs: what you should know

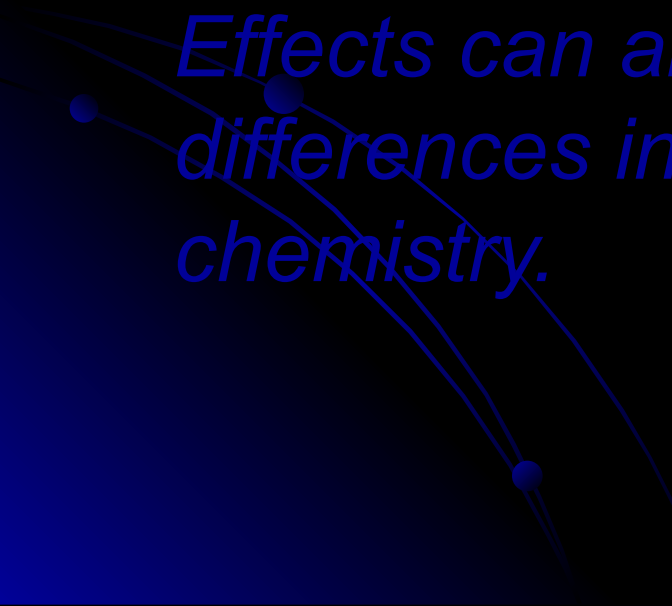
- *These days, drugs can be found everywhere, and it may seem like everyone's doing them. Lots of people are tempted by the excitement or escape that drugs seem to offer.*
 - *But learning the facts about drugs can help you see the risks of chasing this excitement or escape. Here's what you need to know.*
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The Deal on Substances

- *Thanks to medical and drug research, there are thousands of drugs that help people. Antibiotics and vaccines have revolutionized the treatment of infections. Medicines can lower blood pressure*
- *Thanks to medical and drug research, there are thousands of drugs that help people. Antibiotics and vaccines have revolutionized the treatment of infections. Medicines can lower blood pressure, treat diabetes, and reduce the body's rejection of new organs. Medicines can cure, slow, or prevent disease, helping us to lead healthier and happier lives. But there are also*

- *How do drugs work? Drugs are chemicals or substances that change the way our bodies work. When you put them into your body (often by swallowing, inhaling, or injecting them), drugs find their way into your bloodstream and are transported to parts of your body, such as your brain. In the brain, drugs may either intensify or dull your senses, alter your sense of alertness, and sometimes decrease physical pain.*



- *A drug may be helpful or harmful. The effects of drugs can vary depending upon the kind of drug taken, how much is taken, how often it is used, how quickly it gets to the brain, and what other drugs, food, or substances are taken at the same time. Effects can also vary based on the differences in body size, shape, and chemistry.*
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Why People Take Drugs

- *And just as there are many kinds of drugs available, there are as many reasons for trying them or starting to use them regularly. People take drugs just for the pleasure they believe they can bring. Often it's because someone tried to convince them that drugs would make them feel good or that they'd have a better time if they took them.*





DRUGS

Some people are ugly enough without them.

Some teens believe drugs will help them think better, be more popular, stay more active, or become better athletes. Others are simply curious and figure one try won't hurt. Others want to fit in. A few use drugs to gain attention from their parents.

Many teens use drugs because they're depressed or think drugs will help them escape their problems. The truth is, drugs don't solve problems — they simply hide feelings and problems. When a drug wears off, the feelings and problems remain, or become worse. Drugs can ruin every aspect of a person's life.

Here are the facts on some of the more common drugs.

- **Alcohol**

- The oldest and most widely used drug in the world, alcohol is a depressant that alters perceptions, emotions, and senses.
- **Effects & Dangers:**
- Alcohol first acts as a stimulant, and then it makes people feel relaxed and a bit sleepy.
- High doses of alcohol seriously affect judgment and coordination. Drinkers may have slurred speech, confusion, depression, short-term memory loss, and slow reaction times.
- Large volumes of alcohol drunk in a short period of time may cause alcohol poisoning.



Marijuana

- The most widely used illegal drug in the United States, marijuana resembles green, brown, or gray dried parsley with stems or seeds. A stronger form of marijuana called hashish (hash) looks like brown or black cakes or balls. Marijuana is often called a gateway drug because frequent use can lead to the use of stronger drugs.



- **How It's Used:** Marijuana is usually smoked — rolled in papers like a cigarette (joints), or in hollowed-out cigars (blunts), pipes (bowls), or water pipes (bongs). Some people mix it into foods or brew it as a tea.
- **Effects & Dangers:**
- Marijuana can affect mood and coordination. Users may experience mood swings that range from stimulated or happy to drowsy or depressed.
- Marijuana also elevates heart rate and blood pressure. Some people get red eyes and feel very sleepy or hungry. The drug can also make some people paranoid or cause them to hallucinate.
- Marijuana is as tough on the lungs as cigarettes — steady smokers suffer coughs, wheezing, and frequent colds.
- **Addictiveness:** Teens who use marijuana can become psychologically dependent upon it to feel good, deal with life, or handle stress. In addition, their bodies may demand more and more marijuana to achieve the same kind of high experienced in the beginning.



Understanding Medications and what they do



- *Sometimes it seems like there are more medicines than there are diseases, and it can be hard to keep them straight. Some medications can be bought over the counter at pharmacies or other stores. Others require a doctor's prescription. A few medicines are available only in hospitals.*

- ***What Are Medicines?***

- Medicines are chemicals or compounds used to cure, halt, or prevent disease; ease symptoms; or help in the diagnosis of certain illnesses. Advances in medications have enabled doctors to cure many diseases and save lives.



When we think about taking medications, we often think of pills. The truth is, there are many ways in which medications can be delivered, such as:

- *liquids that are swallowed (like cough syrup)*
- *drops that are put into ears or eyes*
- *creams, gels, or ointments that are rubbed onto the skin*
- *inhalers (like nasal sprays or asthma inhalers)*
- *patches that are stuck to skin (called transdermal patches)*
- *tablets that are placed under the tongue (called sublingual medicines; the medication is absorbed into blood vessels and enters the bloodstream)*
- *injections (shots) or intravenous (inserted into a vein) medications*



Just say NO!

