



YOUR BODY, YOUR LIFE

**YOUR  
CHOICE**

# Staying Safe

**This** booklet contains the facts about drugs and solvents

**No myths**

**No hype**

**Just the facts**

**Facts** about different drugs, their effects, their risks, how to deal with problems, whether they happen to you or a friend. Facts about what the law says, what medics say and generally how to stay safe

Safe Safe Safe



**Keep** it handy and  
show it to your friends - the  
first aid information alone  
could save a life

# Look after Each Other

**Know** as much as possible about drugs and solvents, their effects and their risks

**Watch** out for your friends if they are taking anything

**If** someone starts to panic, stay with them and let them know that they're going to be alright

**If someone feels ill or collapses, get help quickly (see section on First Aid)**

**If** you are feeling down or on edge, drugs could make you feel worse

# Each Other

**The** best advice is not to mix any drugs, this includes alcohol and prescription drugs

**Wear** lightweight clothes for dancing if you're going to a club to help you keep cool

**If** you've had epileptic fits, heart problems or a mental illness, illicit drugs can be particularly dangerous

**Don't** allow your friends to drive if they've taken drugs, including alcohol

**Buying and taking drugs could get you into trouble with your family, the law and drug dealers**

**Using** drugs could lead to you being forced to leave home and could land you in hospital, court or even prison

# First Aid

**Watch** out for your friends if they have taken drugs or solvents and they start feeling:

- dizzy or faint
- sick (ie want to vomit)
- suddenly tired
- sudden headache or cramps (especially in the arms and legs)
- scared or confused
- short of breath

**If** they are drinking water to cool down, don't let them gulp down too much as this can be very dangerous



**If someone collapses**

**If** the person is breathing, put them in the recovery position by:

- turning them onto their side
- tilt their head back to make sure their airway remains open (see picture)
- clear their airway if blocked and loosen their clothing
- check breathing and pulse regularly
- stay with them until help arrives

**If** the person is not breathing and you **know** how to do mouth to mouth resuscitation, do so. **If not**, wait until help arrives.

**If someone feels unwell**

1. Call for help - a first aider if in a club, or phone for an ambulance. If phoning for an ambulance give clear details of where you are and watch out for the ambulance coming
2. If you know, tell the first aider or paramedic what drugs have been taken - **this information could save a life**

**If** someone is having a bad trip they may become very anxious and distressed. Reassure them by telling them they will be okay and you will stay with them (a bad trip may last a very long time)

**If** they show no signs of becoming calmer or they become hysterical, take them to hospital, remembering to reassure them.

Tell hospital staff what drugs you think, or know, they have taken

# cannabis

grass  
Marijuana dope

**Effects** depend on how you feel before you take it, how much you take, how strong it is and where you are

**Relaxes** you and changes the way you see the world

**Can affect**  
**short-term**  
**memory**



PoT spliff SKUNK blow  
WEED ganja wacky-backy  
HERB Hash

**Can cause damage to your chest - including bronchitis or lung cancer**

It can make you feel anxious and paranoid

**Long-term users can become very lethargic and come to depend on using it**





**Affects** the way you see things and how you feel about yourself and your surroundings, eg can make familiar objects, people, music appear strange

**Almost** impossible to tell how strong a tab is until it is taken, some people experience much stronger effects than others

**Trips** last for  
approximately  
**8 to 12 hours**

**Trips** can be enjoyable or very upsetting

**Can** increase depression and anxiety

**Can** lead to mental illness



acid  
Strawberries  
Tabs  
BLOTTERS  
microdots  
Trips

If a trip is bad, this can be very frightening

**Watch** out for friends if they are having a bad trip - reassure and comfort them

**Flashbacks** (reliving the trip) can occur weeks or months after a trip - they can be frightening and may be dangerous as they come unexpectedly

**Magic Mushrooms** - similar effects and risks as LSD

**Additional** risk of picking poisonous mushrooms by mistake





**Speeds** up your body's system and causes mood changes

**Effects** vary from feeling stimulated and relaxed to feeling anxious and paranoid



**Effects** usually last for about 2 to 4 hours but can last longer

**Coming** 'down' can make you feel anxious and depressed

**Likely** to make you feel hot and sweaty and you may become dehydrated and overheated, especially if dancing - drinking alcohol will increase these effects

# XTC EVE DOVES adam Ecstasy

**Sip** about a pint of water every hour if dancing non-stop (it's better to sip small amounts of water regularly rather than drink large amounts all at once), take rests often and try to **keep cool**

**If** you are not dancing, sip no more than a small glass of water an hour

**Ecstasy** puts a lot of physical strain on your heart, liver and kidneys

**Taking** other drugs, alcohol or more ecstasy increases the risks

**The** long-term effects are still not fully understood



# poppers

**Makes** the blood flow faster through your heart and veins - this lasts for a short time, eg 5 minutes

**Causes** a rush of dizzy energy - may make you feel light-headed and giggly

**May** also cause headaches, dizziness, flushed face and skin problems



REDS Liquid Goldhard  
Amyl rushRAVE  
ROCK

Taking with other drugs will put a massive strain on your heart

Poppers can be particularly dangerous for people with breathing or heart problems

**Swallowing the liquid can cause death**

Smoking when taking poppers is highly dangerous as poppers can go up in flames easily



speed

Makes your heart beat faster and makes you feel you have more energy

**Can affect your blood pressure and heart rate**

Can make you feel confident and alert



Makes your appetite disappear and you feel less tired

**Effects last for about 6 to 8 hours**

Coming 'down' will make you feel tired, hungry, anxious, panicky and depressed

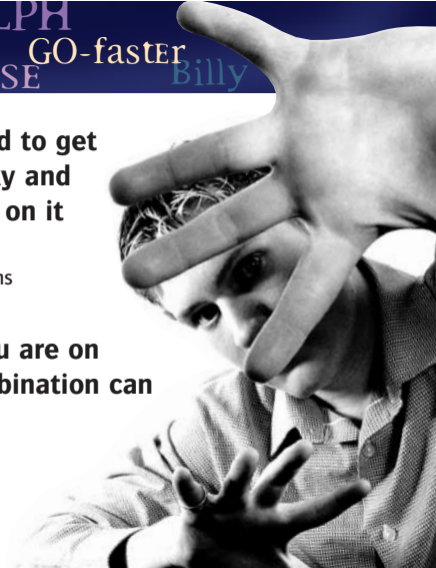
amphetamines  
Whizz  
uppers  
paste  
SULPH  
meth  
Base  
GO-faster  
Billy

**Using more and more speed to get the same effect is very risky and you could begin to depend on it**

More chance of suffering from colds and infections

**Never take speed while you are on anti-depressants - the combination can kill you**

Taking with other drugs puts a massive strain on your system





**Increases** your heart rate and blood pressure

**Can** make you feel sick, irritable or aggressive

**Causes** an intense 'rush' for about 2 minutes,  
followed by a less intense feeling  
for about 20 to 30 minutes

**The** effects of crack  
(freebase) last for about  
10 to 12 minutes

**Many** users need more and more  
to stay 'high' and are unable to  
stop taking it



# Coke crack      StonES      rocks FREEBASE

**Coming** 'down' makes you feel exhausted, hungry, anxious, panicky, depressed and even paranoid

**There** are many health risks including chest pain, heart problems, lung damage and damage to the nasal passages

**Long-term** users can suffer mental problems including depression, anxiety and even severe mental illness

**Even** more dangerous if mixed with other drugs including alcohol



# heroin

**Heroin** is a brown powdered drug which is usually heated and then injected into the arm



**Effects** last for 2 to 3 hours

**A** habit can start very quickly

**People** often find that they can't stop using it

**This** can lead to problems with family, friends, money, poor health, serious illness and even death

**As** heroin is injected there is the added risk of blood infections, hepatitis or HIV (which can lead to AIDS)

**If** you ever find a syringe, don't touch it, tell a responsible person as soon as possible



# solvents

**Sniffing** can have an effect on your heart which can kill you

**Suffocation,**  
choking on your  
own vomit and  
accidents when  
sniffing can also  
kill you



# aerosols

GLUE Gas  
Marker Pens

**Long-term** use can cause damage to your liver, kidneys, lungs and nervous system

**Most** solvents are highly flammable

**1** out of every 4 people who die sniffing solvents are first time users



alcohol

SPiRiTs

alcoPops  
bEER  
cider  
Wine

Alcohol can make you feel more confident

It can also make you more likely to take risks

**Can cause damage to many parts of your body, including your liver and brain**

Mixing alcohol with other drugs is very dangerous

Too much alcohol all in one go can harm you

You are also more likely to get involved in fights or have an accident if you've been drinking



**Never drive after you've had a drink**

tobacco

cigarettes  
cigars  
fags  
Roll-ups

Makes your breath and clothes smell

Can cause damage to your heart and lungs

## Can cause cancer

Can affect your ability to play sports

Reduces the amount of money you have to spend on other things



**Tobacco** is the cause of the largest number of preventable deaths in Northern Ireland each year



# Drugs and the Law

the Law  
the Law  
the Law

The most common offence is possession of a drug. More serious offences are supply and intention to supply. This includes giving or selling drugs to a friend, or even looking after them for someone else

**Punishments range from a caution or fine, right up to a prison sentence, depending on the circumstances. (This is a very complex area of the law and these are only very general guidelines)**

Even if a first time offender with a small amount of drugs is just cautioned or fined, it can still have very serious long-term effects

Getting in trouble with the law over drugs could mean you losing your driving licence, your job and could even mean that you will not be allowed to visit certain countries. Taking drugs on holiday is an added danger, as other countries have different, and often very severe, punishments

# info info info More information

**If** you or a friend want to know more about drugs,  
call the National Drugs Helpline  
on



**Calls** are free and won't appear on your phone bill (although the number can

appear on the bill for some mobile phones), plus you won't need to give your name

For more information  
on drugs call the  
**NATIONAL DRUGS HELPLINE**  
on

**0800 77 66 00**



**Health**  
Promotion  
Agency



[www.healthpromotionagency.org.uk](http://www.healthpromotionagency.org.uk)