

## UPPERS

You can take your cocaine,  
Take that LSD,  
Take a smoke of reefer baby,  
Take you some "ecstasy",  
Put them all away I got a brand new brew,  
I got something much more stronger for you.  
I'm the drug, baby, I'm the drug,  
I'm the drug, drug, drug,  
I'm the drug, drug, baby, I'm the drug

The most popular uppers in order of strength are:

Caffeine, the mildest and most widely used stimulant, nicotine, the next most popular, used by 1.3 billion people worldwide. plant stimulants such as betel nuts, khat leaves, and ephedra; amphetamine congeners used in diet pills and attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder medications. Amphetamine or methamphetamine sold as "meth," "crank" and "crystal," and finally, cocaine, sold as coke, freebase, and crack.

The primary pharmacologic action of an upper is the excessive release of the neurotransmitters epinephrine, norepinephrine, serotonin, and of course dopamine. The release of these neurochemicals diminishes appetite, focuses attention, increases energy, and stimulates physical activity. Uppers can also cause a rush and a high.

All uppers raise the heart rate and blood pressure, constrict blood vessels, and stimulate the central nervous system, while releasing energy that cries out to be used.

"You get excited. You don't just sit down and relax. You can't you gotta be moving something. You cannot stay still. You got, either your hands and your feet or you know, anything."

At first glance, uppers appear to be wonder drugs - All-American chemicals that stimulate the traits we admire most . . . alertness, energy, drive, and being thin. However, like most things that are too good to be true, too much stimulation can be counterproductive.

Since cocaine and meth release greater amounts of neurotransmitters than coffee or tobacco, their mental and physical effects are more intense. In addition, the rush and high they produce reinforces the desire to continue use, even more intensely than the milder stimulants. This is the main reason that meth and coke are used in a binge pattern.

"I was always thinking about a way to get money, to get some more. You know,

whether I had started that day or not, I'd wake up in the morning and if two or three dollars hit my hand, that's all it took to start the day and I'd be on a mission all day."

Drug use like fashion, varies from generation to generation. Amphetamine compounds were initially used in the thirties in the form of Benzedrine and Dexedrine inhalers. In World War II both allied and axis powers dispensed millions of doses of biphphetamine to keep soldiers and pilots alert and aggressive.

Because reduced appetite is one of the most desirable effects of all amphetamines, there was a resurgence of use in the sixties as billions of doses were sold as diet pills.

"I had started to losing weight and I wasn't sleeping and I wasn't had becoming terribly irritable and I wasn't myself at all."

It wasn't long before the public realized that even non-dieters could enjoy the amphetamine rush, and illicit manufacturing expanded to fill the demand.

"One of the main reasons that I began using meth was to um, change my body image. I always hated being overweight and it, I found out you know just through friends that did it, that it's a quick way to loose weight and you know it was just a way that I could have that body I always wanted. "

The most recent wave of methamphetamine abuse came about due to the use of crystal meth also know as ice or dextromethamphetamine. This slight chemical alteration lowers the melting point of the drug thus allowing it to be smoked. This rapid delivery method expanded the abuse of meth and increased all its negative consequences.

"I didn't take care of my kids; my whole life went totally a 180 in the opposite way. I begin to sell drugs and I justified it to myself. Everything just all went down hill and there were things that I thought that I would never do I ended up doing."

Although their effects are similar, meth and coke have significant differences at the neurochemical level. Both drugs force the release of the same neurotransmitters, and they both prevent them from being reabsorbed, but only methamphetamine blocks the metabolism of the neurotransmitters extending the effects for 4 to 6 hours compared to just 20 minutes to 1 hour for cocaine.

"I will abuse it and abuse it until all my resources are gone, there is no more drugs, there is no more money, there is nothing to pawn....and then you get into the down part, coming off of it which is the worst thing ever. It's so completely painful."

In addition to intense craving for the drug, methamphetamine or cocaine use can trigger anger and violence, particularly in people who are prone to those

behaviors.

“Many times when I’d come home drunk or something and, or like I’d just go to the bathroom and start snorting cocaine and I’d come outside my parents or, or family members would start saying something to me and I’d just like freak out and like punch the walls.”

“So, so the question is does cocaine, can cocaine potentially make people more violent or dangerous, whatever, I, I think that we all know that.”

Both methamphetamine and cocaine can trigger intense paranoia because they over stimulate the fear, flight, fright center of the brain, creating a hyper vigilant reaction.

“But the second I do a rail of Cocaine, I become so completely paranoid. I lock myself up in the house; I make sure all the windows or blinds are closed, and you’ll see me ever five minutes peeking out the window, checking to see who’s outside, what’s going on.”

“I would hallucinate. I would um, wouldn’t sleep at night, at all. I would probably sleep maybe four, four hours a week.”

Long-term exposure to meth and cocaine can directly damage blood vessels, heart muscles. Short-term high-dose use can trigger arrhythmias, rapid uncontrolled heart beats, heart attacks, and strokes. In susceptible individuals even low-dose use can trigger these effects.

Both methylphenidate, used to treat attention deficit hyperactivity disorders (ADHD), and diet pills, used to treat obesity, are amphetamine congeners, drugs similar to pure amphetamine compounds but not as strong. On the other hand, over use and abuse can cause many of the same cardiovascular and dependency problems.

Besides methylphenidate, amphetamines such as Adderall are also used to treat ADHD.

For people with ADHD, these stimulants work in a contradictory fashion and have a calming rather than a stimulating effect.

“Before I started taking it I would be up days on end, I would unable to sleep and my mind would race, I couldn’t concentrate. I got really bad grades in school.”

People who have ADHD lack sufficient dopamine to stay focused and calm. Since Ritalin and other medications prescribed for ADHD stimulate the release of dopamine, it creates enough of the neurotransmitter to help a person stay attentive.

"I was able to hold conversations with people like I am doing now. I was able to read for extended periods of times whereas before if I was reading I maybe for only five minutes at a time."

There are many rituals associated with psychoactive drugs. Many take on a life of their own and can contribute to excess use and abuse.

"Well, which comes first, probably the cigarette. That's the first thing I want in the morning, then once that's down, I want to mix some coffee. It's kind of a life rhythm."

Researchers have suggested that for a person who has not developed a high tolerance, about 3 cups of brewed coffee a day. After that, negative effects such as jitteriness and slightly addled thinking, start to occur.

"When I was fourteen, a friend of mine and I got a couple of boxes of NoDoz and downed the whole two boxes of 'em between us. We got way sick, very sick. Way more sick than I've ever gotten off of alcohol."

"When I first started smoking, it was a head rush. It felt really good. I liked it and it a, made me feel kind of dizzy. Any more it's just to make stress go away."

"It calms me down. Now I think I'm not sure if it's mostly the calm or just the fact of getting rid of the stress of having a nicotine fit, just keeping the nicotine levels at a point where I don't stress out or freak out or bitch at anybody or yell or scratch their \* eyes out."

"Cigarettes are the most addictive substance I've ever come across in all of my experiments. I've tried to quit a couple of times. I've tried the nicotine gum. I've tried just quitting cold turkey."

"I did quit once for nine months or, twice for nine months the first time when I was pregnant. The second time I decided just to quit cold turkey."

"Well, I'm definitely more short of breath than most people my age and my size. I can't run as far, walk as far, anything like that."

"Here we have a healthy, normal lung from an adult. Um, you can see that the tissue is clear, rather a delicate pink and not a lot of fibrous tissue, compared to that we have the lung of an adult smoker. You can see the particulate matter present in the tissue and we found that about 80 to 95% of all lung cancers, and here you see a cancerous mass inside the lung tissue of an adult smoker, are associated with smoking, usually first hand smoke, but sometimes second hand smoke. Survival rate for cancers like this is usually about 30%, five years."

“It might be shortening my life and I don’t breathe as well, you know. I love to hike and that’s difficult. I get short of breath too easily. Get dizzy. Um, I want to be around when my kids get older.”

The facts are clear. Tobacco is the deadliest psychoactive drug. Cigarettes, cigars, and smokeless tobacco cause more than 400,000 premature deaths a year in the United States and more than 5 million worldwide.

Come to where the flavor is, come to Marlboro country.

Tobacco induced heart disease, lung cancer, and other chronic lung diseases are responsible for the majority of those deaths.

Join the modern folk, it makes sense to smoke, buy Muriel-mild today.

Smoke, yourself to death . . .  
You’re going to smoke yourself to death,  
Wo, wo, wo, wo, wo, wo, wo, wo . . .  
Smoke . . . yourself to death....  
Nicotine ain’t bad as gasoline,  
Smoke . . . yourself to death,  
You’re going to smoke . . . yourself to death,  
Come on smoke . . . yourself to death.  
Smoke yourself to death,  
Wo, wo, wo, wo, wo, wo, wo, wo . . .  
Smoke... yourself to death.