

Health Risks Associated with AOD Abuse

The misuse of alcohol and illegal use of controlled substances also creates health risks for the user. A review of some of the more prominent risks includes:

Alcohol, a depressant, is absorbed into the bloodstream and transmitted to virtually all parts of the body. Although the impact varies with each individual, even moderate amounts of alcohol reduce physical coordination and mental alertness. Larger amounts cause staggering, slurred speech, double vision, sudden mood swings, and unconsciousness. Long-term heavy drinking and binge drinking may result in respiratory arrest and death. Long-term drinking increases the risk of developing liver and heart disease, circulatory problems, peptic ulcers, various forms of cancer, and irreversible brain damage. Heavy drinkers also may become dependent upon the drug and die if it is withdrawn too quickly.

In addition to the above mentioned health risks, an association has been identified between alcohol use and impaired learning, violence, injuries, accidents, sexual violence unwanted pregnancy, and sexually transmitted infections/diseases.

NARCOTICS—Uses and Effects				
Drugs	Dependence potential	Possible effects	Effects of overdose	Withdrawal syndrome
Heroin	Physical dependence is a consequence of chronic opioid use, and withdrawal takes place when drug use is discontinued. Use can create psychological dependence. Long after the physical need for the drug has passed, the addict may continue to think and talk about using drugs and feel overwhelmed coping with daily activities.	Euphoria Drowsiness Slowed breathing or "respiratory depression" Constricted pupils Nausea	Slow and shallow breathing Clammy skin Convulsions Coma Confusion Extreme drowsiness Constricted pupils Possible death	Yawning
Morphine				Loss of appetite
Codeine				Irritability
Hydrocodone				Tremors
Hydromorphone				Panic
Oxycodone				Cramps
Methadone and LAAM				Nausea
Fentanyl and analogs				Runny nose
Other Narcotics				Chills and sweating
	Watery eyes			
	Depression			
	Vomiting			
	Increased heart rate and			

NARCOTICS—Uses and Effects

Drugs	Dependence potential	Possible effects	Effects of overdose	Withdrawal syndrome
				blood pressure

DEPRESSANTS—Uses and Effects

Drugs	Dependence potential	Possible effects	Effects of overdose	Withdrawal syndrome
Chloral Hydrate	Prolonged use of depressants can lead to physical dependence even at doses recommended for medical treatment.	Vomiting Slurred speech Disorientation Drunken behavior without odor of alcohol Amnesia	Shallow respiration Clammy Skin Dilated pupils Weak and rapid pulse Coma Possible death	Anxiety Insomnia Tremors Delirium Convulsions Possible death
Barbiturates				
Benzodiazepines				
Glutethimide				
Other Depressants	Long-term use of depressants produces psychological dependence and tolerance.			

STIMULANTS—Uses and Effects

Drugs	Dependence potential	Possible effects	Effects of overdose	Withdrawal syndrome
Cocaine	Tolerance, in which more and more drug is needed to produce the usual effects, can develop rapidly, and psychological dependence occurs.	Increase alertness Euphoria Increased pulse rate and blood pressure Excitation Insomnia Loss of appetite Paranoia	Agitation Increased body temperature Hallucinations Convulsions Cardiovascular collapse Possible death	Depression Anxiety Drug craving Extreme fatigue
Amphetamine/ Methamphetamine				
Methylphenidate				
Other Stimulants				

CANNABIS—Uses and Effects

Drugs	Dependence potential	Possible effects	Effects of overdose	Withdrawal syndrome
Marijuana	Long term, regular use can lead to physical dependence and withdrawal following discontinuation, as well as psychic addiction or dependence.	Impaired judgment Euphoria Relaxed inhibitions Increased appetite Disorientation Cancer risk	Fatigue Paranoia Possible psychosis	Occasional reports of insomnia Hyperactivity Decreased appetite
Tetrahydrocannabinol				
Hashish and hashish oil				

HALLUCINOGENS—Uses and Effects

Drugs	Dependence potential	Possible effects	Effects of overdose	Withdrawal syndrome
LSD	Unknown	Illusions and hallucinations Altered perception of time and distance Increased heart rate Dilated pupils	Longer, more intense "trip" episodes Psychosis Respiratory depression Convulsions Coma Possible death	Unknown
Mescaline and peyote				
Phencyclidines and analogs				
Other hallucinogens				

ANABOLIC STERIODS—Uses and Effects

Drugs	Dependence potential	Possible effects	Effects of overdose	Withdrawal syndrome
Testosterone (Cypionate, Enanthate)	Unknown	Virilization Acne Testicular atrophy Gynecomastia Aggressive behavior Edema	Unknown	Possible severe depression

Charts and information from the Drug Enforcement Agency Publication -
https://www.dea.gov/pr/multimedia-library/publications/drug_of_abuse.pdf