

COCAINE & CRACK COCAINE

Cocaine is a white powder that comes from the leaves of the South American coca plant. Cocaine is either “snorted” through the nasal passages or injected intravenously. Cocaine belongs to a class of drugs known as stimulants, which tend to give a temporary illusion of limitless power and energy that leave the user feeling depressed, edgy, and craving more. Crack is a smokable form of cocaine that has been chemically altered.

Cocaine and crack are highly addictive. Dependency on cocaine and crack is so strong that these drugs dominate all aspects of an addict’s life. Addiction can erode physical and mental health, drain financial resources, drive away family and friends, and destroy careers. Addicts hurt themselves and those around them.

PHYSICAL RISKS ASSOCIATED WITH USING ANY AMOUNT OF COCAINE AND CRACK

- ❖ Increases in blood pressure, heart rate, breathing rate, and body temperature
- ❖ Heart attacks, strokes, and respiratory failure
- ❖ Hepatitis or AIDS through shared needles
- ❖ Brain seizures
- ❖ Reduction of the body’s ability to resist and combat infection

PSYCHOLOGICAL RISKS

- ❖ Violent, erratic, or paranoid behavior
- ❖ Hallucinations and “coke bugs” – a sensation of imaginary insects crawling over the skin
- ❖ Confusion, anxiety, and depression, loss of interest in food or sex
- ❖ “Cocaine psychosis” – losing touch with reality, loss of interest in friends, family, sports, hobbies, and other activities

FACTS TO CONSIDER

- Some users spend hundreds or thousands of dollars on cocaine and crack each week and will do anything to support their habit. Many turn to drug selling, prostitution, or other crimes.
- Cocaine and crack use has been a contributing factor in a number of drowning, car crashes, falls, burns, and suicides.
- Cocaine and crack addicts often become unable to function sexually.
- Even first time users may experience seizures or heart attacks, which can be fatal.

Source: NCADI, “Straight Facts About Drugs and Alcohol”

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