

# ALCOHOL AND OTHER DRUGS

## A brief overview

A drug is any substance that affects a person's mental state, perception, physiology, thinking, and behavior. This handout is intended to provide a brief overview of commonly used substances in Australia and is by no means exhaustive.

There are seven general categories of substances: stimulants, depressants, cannabinoids, psychedelics, opioids, dissociatives and empathogens.

### *There is no such thing as 'safe' drug use*

The use of any substance carries risk and it is important to be careful and informed if you and/or your friends are engaging in drug use.

### *Did you know?*



The harms related to alcohol and other drug use account for 6.7% of all disease and injury in Australia



Alcohol and other drug use also account for 6,660 deaths each year



0% of young adults aged 18-24 engage in illicit drug use

Substance use increases the risk of psychological distress and mental health difficulties, so it's important to educate yourself on the risk factors associated with substances you may already be using, or might be considering trying. It is also important to familiarise yourself with the signs and symptoms associated with the use, overdose, and addiction to substances (particularly if you or one of your mates have started to use substances).

### *Signs to look out for*

If you are worried about your drug use or concerned for someone you know, there are indicators to look out for which include:

- ▶ Spending large amounts of time getting, using or recovering from the effects
- ▶ using in greater amounts
- ▶ needing to use more to get the same effect

- ▶ difficulty stopping or cutting back
- ▶ cravings and withdrawal symptoms
- ▶ experiencing problems with social life.

Check out the Alcohol and Drug Foundations' interactive Drug Wheel via the link below for a comprehensive but quick overview of types of substances, their effects, and other essential info.

### *Other things which might be helpful*

- ▶ Alcohol and Drug Foundation: [adf.org.au](http://adf.org.au)
- ▶ Lives of substance: [livesofsubstance.org.au](http://livesofsubstance.org.au)
- ▶ Adis: [adis.health.qld.gov.au](http://adis.health.qld.gov.au)
- ▶ DrinkWise: [drinkwise.org.au](http://drinkwise.org.au)
- ▶ National Drug and Alcohol Research Centre (NDARC): [ndarc.med.unsw.edu.au](http://ndarc.med.unsw.edu.au)

### *Support at Griffith*

Counselling and Wellbeing offers Griffith students information and support for substance abuse and addiction.

Contact [counsellor@griffith.edu.au](mailto:counsellor@griffith.edu.au) or visit [griffith.edu.au/counselling](http://griffith.edu.au/counselling) to learn more.

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See the below table for a list of common drugs, their effects, methods of use and street names they are sometimes known as.

NAME OF DRUG & AKAS	TYPE OF DRUG	ROUTE OF USE
<b>ALCOHOL</b> aka booze / grog / piss	Alcohol is a depressant, though this does not mean that it makes a person depressed. Depressants slow down messages between the brain and body, often generating a sense of calm and relaxation.	Oral.
<b>PSILOCYBIN</b> aka magic mushrooms / shrooms / mushies / golden tops	Magic mushrooms are naturally occurring and are consumed for their hallucinogenic effects. They are classified as psychedelics because of the effect they have on perception, mood, and thought.	Magic mushrooms can be eaten fresh, cooked, or brewed as tea. Dried mushrooms can be smoked.
<b>CANNABIS</b> aka marijuana / weed / dope / green / ganja / 420 / chronic / hash / leaf	Cannabis is a cannabinoid and comes in different forms including marijuana (dried leaves or flowers), hash oil, concentrate, and hashish (dried plant resin).	Cannabis can be smoked, eaten or vaporized.
<b>COCAINE</b> aka rack / coke / nose candy / c / blow / gagger / snags	Cocaine is a stimulant. It speeds up the messages travelling between the brain and the rest of the body.	Snort / rubbed into gums / injected.
<b>MDMA</b> aka ecstasy / eckies, pingers / e / molly / mum and dad	MDMA is an empathogen. Empathogens increase an individual's feeling of empathy and benevolence towards others and increase feelings of being socially accepted by and connected to others.	MDMA usually comes in a tablet form and is swallowed. It can also come as capsules, powder or crystal.
<b>ICE</b> aka crystal meth / meth / gear / shabu / Bradbury / shard	Crystal methamphetamine (ICE) is a stimulant. It is stronger and more addictive than the powder form of methamphetamine known as speed, and therefore has more harmful side effects.	Ice is generally smoked (for immediate effect) or injected but can also be swallowed and snorted.
<b>GHB</b> aka G / fantasy / soap / grievous bodily harm (GBH) / Georgia / homeboy	GHB (gamma hydroxybutyrate) is a depressant, which means it slows down the messages travelling between the brain and the body.	GHB is usually swallowed, but can be injected or inserted anally (aka 'shelved').
<b>KETAMINE</b> aka special k / kitkat / k / ket / horse tranq / super k	Ketamine is used by medical practitioners and veterinarians as an anaesthetic. It is classified as a dissociative drug.	Ketamine can be swallowed, snorted, or injected.
<b>OXYCODONE</b> aka oxy / hillbilly heroin	Oxycodone hydrochloride is part of a group of drugs known as opioids. Opioids interact with opioid receptors in the brain and lead to pain relief, relaxation, pleasure and contentment.	Oxycodone is usually swallowed but is sometimes injected or used as a suppository.
<b>BENZODIAZEPINES</b> aka benzos / xannies / downers / sleepers	Benzodiazepines are depressants. Some people use benzodiazepines illegally to get high, or to help with the come down from stimulants, such as amphetamines.	Benzodiazepines are usually swallowed, though some people inject them.