

What is MDMA?

Is ‘Ecstasy’ the same as MDMA??

MDMA (3,4, Methylene Dioxy Methamphetamine) is usually taken by mouth in a tablet form. MDMA is also known as “Ecstasy”, “X”, “E”, “Adam”, “Molly”, “XTC”, “M&M” and “MDM”, “rolls”, “beans” and others. It tends to be distributed in colorful, branded tablets and is taken by mouth. MDMA is often taken for euphoric and stimulant effects.

Ecstasy and MDMA often contain other unknown chemicals, such as PMMA and PMA, which are much more toxic and can cause their own life-threatening side effects.

Why do people take MDMA?

These drugs are often taken for their euphoric and stimulant effects. Users feel “at peace” and that “all is right with the world”. They also believe that they may increase sexuality and enhance pleasure.

What side effects can MDMA have?

Use of MDMA can often cause feelings of anxiety and paranoia. It can also lead to hallucinations (hearing voices or seeing things). Users report dry mouth, teeth grinding, sweating or nausea. Some may experience chest pain, palpitations (an awareness of their heartbeat). Others may experience headache, weakness, or difficulty speaking.

MDMA can also have serious, life-threatening side effects when used on its own, and/or if combined with other medications (including anti-depressants).

So, MDMA use can be fatal?

Yes. Whether used on its own, or in combination with other medications (including anti-depressants), significant and life-threatening health consequences are a very real danger with any MDMA ingestion.

MDMA acts as a stimulant and causes an increase in heart rate and blood pressure, which can lead to heart attacks and strokes. MDMA can also cause multiple systems in the body to shut down.

If I only take a small amount, can I avoid the bad effects?

No. There is no known “safe” amount of MDMA that can be taken. Significant, potentially life threatening effects can occur with any MDMA ingestion.

Can users be certain that their MDMA is “pure”?

No. MDMA and other illicit drugs often contain other chemicals which can cause their own side effects with potential threat to life. There is no “safe” street drug.

Are there any long term effects of MDMA?

Chronic use of MDMA has been thought to cause changes in mood, sleep patterns, cognition and memory.

How would I know if I’m having an adverse reaction to MDMA and what should I do?

An adverse reaction to MDMA can mean different things to different people. Use of MDMA can often cause feelings of anxiety, paranoia and can lead to hallucinations (hearing voices or seeing things). Users will also often report dry mouth, teeth grinding, sweating or nausea. Some may experience chest pain, palpitations (an awareness of their heartbeat), headache, weakness, or difficulty speaking.

The Poison and Drug Information Service (PADIS) is a free, confidential, 24/7 service for all Albertans. Staff are specially trained in the assessment and management of exposures to drugs and toxins like MDMA and are available by calling 1-800-332-1414.

If anyone who has used MDMA becomes unconscious, stops breathing, experiences chest pain or has a seizure, call 911 or your local ambulance immediately.

If you are concerned about your own drug or alcohol use, the drug and/or alcohol use of a friend or loved one, or would simply like more information on drug and alcohol use, contact the Addiction & Mental Health 24 Hour Helpline at 1-866-332-2322.