

Drugs of Abuse and Some of Their Effects
Information from the Cincinnati Drug & Poison Information Center 1-800-222-1222

Type of Drug	Examples and Comments	Usual Forms Found	Potential for Excessive Use Leading to Physical (Ph) and Psychological (Ps) Dependence	Common Effects at Peak of Drug Response	Possible Effects in Overdose
Sedative/Hypnotics	Alcohol, barbiturates, Placidyl®, Valium®, Xanax®, and many others. Any drug used to calm or sedate could be in this category and may be called downers.	Alcoholic beverages and legitimate looking tablets, capsules and liquids.	High for both Ph & Ps, varies somewhat among drugs. Ph withdrawal effects can be life threatening.	Intoxication, impaired speech & judgement, confusion, drowsiness. Slowed breathing and heart rate.	Death from breathing that slows and from dangerous behavior under influence.
Narcotics/Opioids	Heroin, morphine, Demerol®, Dilaudid®, hydrocodone, oxycodone, codeine, methadone, opium, Talwin®, T's and B's (Talwin & an antihistamine), Stadol®; Almost all drugs prescribed for severe pain.	Legitimate looking tablets and capsules, powders (white, brown, or gray), and injectable liquids.	High for both Ph & Ps; varies somewhat between drugs. Ph withdrawal effects very uncomfortable but rarely life threatening.	Initially may vomit, then become very calm (on the nod) and euphoric, pinpoint pupils	Death from depression of breathing and central nervous system Possible severe toxic effects from contaminants and impurities.
Stimulants: A	Amphetamines, methamphetamine and most related diet drugs. Also Ritalin® Cocaine (crystalline) and processed (freebase, crack). Khat, methcathinone and caffeine.	Legitimate looking tablets and capsules, crystals, powders (usually white).	Ph low to moderate, Ps high; severe depression can occur in withdrawal and has led to suicide (except caffeine which can cause moderate depression and headaches upon withdrawal).	Jitteriness, jolly or high feeling, talkative; may become irritable, fearful (paranoid), and aggressive, dilated pupils, long-term use can cause paranoid psychosis	Hallucinations, increased blood pressure, death from heart rhythm defects and/or convulsions.
Stimulants: B	Amphetamine look-a-likes and Over-the-Counter (OTC) diet aids (contain caffeine, other legal stimulants and ephedrine). Some herbal products.	May look very similar to prescription amphetamines	Ph low to moderate, Ps high	Jitteriness, jolly or high feeling, talkative; may become irritable, fearful (paranoid), and aggressive.	Increased blood pressure and heart rate. Death from excess heart stimulation
Hallucinogens & Entactogens	LSD (acid, windowpane, blotter, microdot, blue stars), mescaline (peyote), psilocybin (some mushrooms), MDMA (ecstasy, XTC, X, Adam DPT, 5-MEO-DIPT (Foxy, Foxy Methoxy), DMT (Businessman's Lunch), Ayuhausca, Nexus (2CB, Venus, Bromo, Toonies), 2CT7 (Blue Mystic) 4-MTA (flatliners, golden eagle), Many Others.	Tablets, capsules, liquid or impregnated on blotter paper, stamps, pieces of clear gelatin, or other items. Plant matter - cacti, mushrooms	No Ph; extent of Ps unknown.	Incoordination, hallucinations, changes in space & time perception, may make irrational verbal statements or movements. Nausea and vomiting. Hyperthermia. These drugs can alter perceptions of reality. Some alter emotion more than others	Severe toxic effects unlikely; death can occur from dangerous behavior while under influence (e.g. driving). Seizures and dehydration can also occur. Glaucoma. Possible hyperthermia and muscle damage.
Delirients	Phencyclidine (PCP, angel dust) Ketamine (Special K) drugs with actions like belladonna (such as Jimson weed - see below). Produce hallucinations and delirium at doses causing other significant toxic effects	Tablets, capsules, powder, crystals & injectable liquid	Low for Ph (gastro-intestinal & muscle symptoms are reported); moderate to high for Ps.	Blank stare, confusion, delirium, disturbed speech, agitation, hostile behavior, depression, increased heart rate and blood pressure, gross incoordination, floating sensation.	Death from effects on heart, respiratory arrest or dangerous behavior, convulsions, increased blood pressure.
Dextromethorphan	DXM. Available in many cough and cold preparations. Robitussin DM®, NyQuil®, Coricidin HBP®, others. (Robo)	Cough syrups, tablets	Ph low, Ps moderate	Euphoria and hallucinations. Adverse effects from other ingredients in OTC products	Psychosis, brain damage, seizures, and death

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Datura Stramonium Datura Innoxia	Jimson Weed, Stink Weed, Mad Apple, Sacred Datura, Green Dragon, Angel's Trumpet, Moonflower	Seeds, plant material and tea - less commonly as cigarettes	Ph and Ps are possible but unlikely	Confusion, agitation, anxiety, hallucinations, dry mouth, thirst, facial flushing, hyperthermia, dilated pupils, and constipation.	Seizure, coma, and death from dangerous behavior
Inhalants A: Gasoline & solvents	Almost any vaporous liquid or aerosol may be inhaled for a temporary high	Certain fuels, typing correction liquids, spot removers, and other solvents	Ph & Ps vary greatly with agent and patterns of use.	Inebriation, impairment of judgement & coordination, delirium.	Sudden sniffing death from cardiac arrhythmia possible. Chronic abuse can cause kidney, liver and eye damage. May cause cancer
Inhalants B: Inhaled Gases	Butane, Propane, Freon, Nitrous Oxide. Nitrous oxide (Laughing gas) is usually found in small metal containers called whippets intended for charging whipped cream canisters.	Aerosol cans, gas containers, liquids	Ph unlikely & Ps varies greatly with patterns of use, but has been reported.	Laughing episodes of euphoria	Sudden sniffing death possible. Death from oxygen deprivation
Inhalants C: Inhaled Nitrites	The nitrites (Rush, poppers, amyl nitrate, etc) are very strong smelling solutions generally in small brown bottles or ampoules.	Liquids	Ps occurs; Ph questionable	Sudden lowering, then elevation of blood pressure & heart rate, sensation of suffocation, flushed, prickly hot feeling.	Less than an ounce has caused death when accidentally or intentionally swallowed. Death from cardiovascular collapse, blood disorders, convulsions.
Marijuana	Sinsemilla, grass, reefer, pot, Thai sticks, blunts many others; Concentrated forms include hashish and hash oil.	Dark green or brown plant material often in plastic bags or as cigarettes (joints). Black or brown cakes or concentrated oily liquid.	Ph low (reported symptoms vary); Ps low for most users, moderate to high for a few. Some cases of significant Ps occur.	Mild stimulation & giddiness followed by related euphoric feeling, red eyes, and interference with thinking, balance, judgment, and recent memory. Increase in heart rate and anxiety.	Severe immediate toxic effects unlikely; death can occur from dangerous behavior while under influence (e.g. driving)
GHB/GBL	Gamma-hydroxybutyrate, G, Georgia home boy, grievous bodily harm, liquid ecstasy	Liquids, tablets, crystals	Ph severe, Ps unknown	Drowsiness, nausea and vomiting, headache, loss of consciousness, loss of reflexes, seizures, coma	Seizures, respiratory depression, coma, and death
Cigarettes & Tobacco Products	Cigarettes, cigars, & other smoking preparations. Snuff, chewing tobacco.	Brand name & generic cigarettes, cloves or "bidis" dried & chopped leaves & "plugs."	Ph moderate, Ps high. Withdrawal syndrome: nervousness, confusion, agitation, and drug seeking behavior.	Dizziness, nausea, increased heart rate, increased blood pressure, peripheral vasoconstriction.	Not typical with usual use. Largest cause of preventable deaths due to cancer. Accidental ingestion by young children can be medical emergency with seizures and coma.
Anabolic steroids	Testosterone, Winstrol®, Anavar® Android®, Halotestin, Methandrostenolone, etc. Androstenedione	Injectable: long acting and short acting water base, oral: capsules and tablets.	Narcotic type withdrawal symptoms have been reported, many case reports of Ps	Increased aggression ("roid rage"), insomnia, violent behavior, irritability, strained relationships	Single acute exposure not severe. Long term high dose use by athletes leads to many hormonal changes, heart and liver toxicity.
Salvia Divinorum	Diviners Sage, La Pastora, Santa Maria	Live plant, dried plant materials and liquid extracts	Ph Low, Ps unknown, likely low.	Hallucinations	Death possible from dangerous behavior while under the influence.

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