



HEROIN

Heroin is a natural opiate made from morphine which is extracted from the opium poppy. Like many drugs made from opium, heroin is a very strong painkiller.

Slang: Street names for drugs can vary around the country.

Brown, skag, H, horse, gear, smack.

The effects

- Heroin slows down body functioning and substantially reduces physical and psychological pain.
- Most people experience a rush or buzz a few minutes after taking it – but this will depend on the amount you take. A small dose can make you feel happy and warm, but a bigger dose you can make you relaxed and very sleepy. Very large doses, or first time dose can make you feel very dizzy and may cause vomiting.
- Heroin is highly addictive. There is a strong possibility of psychological and physical dependence to heroin, the desire to keep using will continue and more and more of the drug will need to be used to ensure you get the same desired effects.
- Unstructured and supported withdrawal from heroin can be very difficult and has strong physical side effects.

The law

Heroin is a class A drug. Possession can get you up to 7 years and supply can mean life for you and your friends.

Appearance and use

When heroin is pure, it is a white powder. However, it is highly mixed with other substance before it is sold and can be anything from brown, to white when sold on the street. It can either be smoked or dissolved in water and injected or, if high purity, it can be snorted

Cost

Feeding a heroin habit can cost hundreds of pounds with some using up to and over £100 worth of heroin a day.

Purity

A user has no way of knowing what their heroin is mixed with. It has been known to be mixed with sugar, starch, powdered milk, or even brick dust.

The risks

- You can die from an overdose. If you are intolerant to a higher dose, it's your first time, or you are unsure of the purity of the heroin you are using, you can overdose ('OD') very easily.
- If you use heroin with other drugs, especially other depressants (e.g. alcohol, tranquilizers), you are more likely to overdose.
- If you inject heroin, you put yourself at risk of contracting HIV/AIDS or Hepatitis as well as all other physical problems associated with injecting.