

NARCOTICS

The term narcotic is sometimes used to refer to any depressant-producing drug. More accurately it refers to the opiate family. These drugs are pain-killers and sleep-inducers. They have high potential for abuse and addiction.

From the resin of the opium poppy come opium, morphine and codeine. Other opiates such as heroin are synthesized from opium derivatives. Medically, morphine is used to relieve pain that otherwise would be intolerable. Codeine is often used in cough suppressants.



Ecstasy (MDMA) is another example of a designer drug but it is placed in the Hallucinogen category, even though it may act more like an amphetamine.

Heroin is the main drug of abuse in this classification. Heroin on the street has now regularly reached a purity as high as 90 percent, so that the beginning user may smoke it in tobacco or



snort it, thus avoiding the unpleasantness of injection. Addiction occurs quickly and the user needs more of the drug, so two or three daily injections become the accepted mode of use. The user experiences an immediate rush of good feelings and calmness. Then he "nods out" in a state of drowsiness. Restlessness, nausea and vomiting may occur.

Breathing slows and unconsciousness may occur. Users are often unaware of injury to themselves because of lack of pain. After five years of heroin use, one in six users dies. Overdose, contamination of heroin, and use of unsterile needles makes heroin use perhaps the most risky of all illegal drugs. Heroin dependency is one of the most difficult dependencies to cure.

China White is a synthetic heroin and one variation of the designer drug fentanyl. It is much more powerful and addictive than heroin but is often sold on the street as heroin. Correctly, designer drugs refer only to opiate derivatives. However, more commonly they refer to any drug designed to give a client a desired effect. They are manufactured by chemists in illicit laboratories and result in a large profit for the producer.