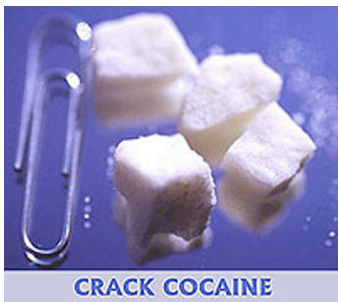


STIMULANTS

Drugs in this category elevate mood, induce euphoria, increase alertness, reduce fatigue and increase heart rate, pulse and blood pressure. In high doses they produce irritability, anxiety and a pattern of psychotic behavior. Included in this category are caffeine, nicotine, cocaine, amphetamines and anabolic steroids.

Anabolic steroids stimulate muscle growth by synthesizing protein and cause weight gain. These steroids are synthetic versions of the male hormone, testosterone. Side effects of anabolic steroid use include: liver disease, sterility in males, increased risk of heart disease and stroke and death. The growth of the long bones is stunted in adolescent users. Those who use steroids are prone to extreme mood swings and personality changes including paranoia, violent behavior and depression.



Cocaine is derived from the coca plant, which grows in the mountains of South America and Southeast Asia. It is used illegally in three forms - powder, freebase and crack, the latter being the most popular now. The feeling of euphoria or well-being is what attracts and soon hooks the user. Cocaine interferes with the body's natural production of the neurotransmitter dopamine, which is responsible for a person's feelings of well-being.

Amphetamines like Benzedrine and Dexedrine, nicknamed "uppers," are strong stimulants. Methamphetamine, known as speed, crystal, meth and crank (not to be confused with crack) is more potent than cocaine. Ice, a stronger form of methamphetamine, is more expensive, but the effects last longer, up to 20 hours.



Nicotine is the stimulant and addictive ingredient in tobacco. Its effects are the same in smoked or non-smoked tobacco products. Heart attacks, lung cancer, and emphysema and chronic bronchitis combined are the three leading killers caused by tobacco use.

Secondhand smoke contributes to health problems in non-smokers, including lung cancer. Children of parents who smoke have an increased frequency of pneumonia and respiratory infections and reduced lung capacity.

Pregnant women who smoke run the risk of suffering miscarriages, premature births, SIDS (Sudden Infant Death Syndrome) and having smaller and shorter babies. Their children may suffer physical, behavioral and/or emotional problems for years.