What is Meth?

Methamphetamine, also known as “speed,” “crank,” “crystal,” or “ice” is a highly addictive, powerful central nervous system stimulant. The color and texture of meth can vary; it is usually white or slightly yellow in a crystal-like powder or rock-like chunks.

Meth use results in increased heart rate and blood pressure, elevated temperature, and wakefulness. These effects can last 8 to 24 hours.

Common Signs of Use

The signs and symptoms of a meth addiction are both physical and psychological:

- Sleep disturbances
- Mood swings, explosive outbursts
- Relationship problems, sudden change in friends, & reduced interaction with family
- Unexplained need for money in order to purchase drugs
- Changes in eating patterns

Harms of Use

- Tolerance develops rapidly, often leading to addiction in a relatively short time.
- Meth use can cause heart palpitations, nausea, damage to blood vessels in the brain, shortness of breath, mental confusion, malnutrition, anorexia, severe anxiety, and depression.
- Continued use can lead to permanent damage to the brain, heart and death.

Adults 55 to 64 years old have the highest meth-caused death rate in San Diego County.
Drug Overdose

An overdose occurs when a toxic dose is consumed. This can happen easily because meth is made illicitly from a variety of toxic chemicals and can be deadly.

Common symptoms of a meth overdose:

- Chest pain
- Arrhythmias
- Hypertension or hypotension
- Difficult or labored breathing
- Agitation
- Hallucinations
- Psychosis
- Seizures
- Rapid or slow heartbeat
- Hyperthermia

A meth overdose can occur suddenly, often without symptoms. If you think someone is suffering from a meth overdose, it is critically important that they get help right away. Call 911 as soon as signs of an overdose are evident, and then take steps to keep the person safe until emergency care arrives.

Tips on how you can help someone using meth:

1. Get your facts
2. Maintain open and honest communication
3. Negotiate and set guidelines
4. Support and encourage positive behavior
5. Don’t forget to look after yourself

Resources

Local
Access and Crisis Line: 888-724-7240
2-1-1 SD or (858) 300-1211
https://www.no2meth.org/ or 1-877-NO-2-METH

National
SMART Recovery: https://www.smartrecovery.org/
Narcotics Anonymous: https://www.na.org/
Crystal Meth Anonymous: https://www.crystalmeth.org/
Al-Anon: https://al-anon.org/
Suicide Prevention Lifeline: 1-800-273-8255
SAMHSA’s National Helpline: 1-800-662-4357

View our full report card online

www.no2meth.org/