

SIGNS OF INTOXICATION

Recognise and describe common signs of intoxication from substance use



SUBSTANCE	EYES OR PUPILS	SKIN/PHYSICAL	SPEECH & COGNITION	AFFECT OR MOOD	GAIT OR MOVEMENT	OTHER POSSIBLE SYMPTOMS
CANNABIS eg. Marijuana	Bloodshot eyes	Possibly clammy but not usually excessively	May have slowed speech and or difficulty maintaining a train of thought, but can be talkative	May be relaxed or even sedated Introspective, possibly giggly and playful	Slowed movements, usually quite lethargic or inactive	Dry mouth, increased desire for sweet or fatty foods
ALCOHOL	Red and glassy	Face may appear flushed and red, but not in all cases	Slurred speech and difficulty concentrating and holding thoughts Confusion	Variable but usually disinhibited with poor impulse control and increased confidence. Can exacerbate existing mood eg. depressed, aggressive	Impaired co-ordination and balance, poor muscle control	Nausea and/or vomiting May smell like alcohol
HEROIN & OTHER OPIATES eg. Morphine, Oxycodone	Pinned, small or constricted pupils	Clammy and warm	Slowed, slurred speech and possible inattention Slowed thought processes and comprehension	May be mildly to heavily sedated and in a pleasant mood	Slowed movements, reduced co-ordination often dropping things, drowsiness	Nausea and/or vomiting, dry mouth, possible itchiness, slowed respiration rate
BENZODIAZEPINES eg. Xanax, Valium	Pinned, small or constricted pupils	Clammy and warm	Slurred speech and stuttering, confusion and disorientation Impaired thinking and memory loss	May feel euphoric, disinhibited, relaxed, diminishing anxiety Drowsiness, sleepiness and fatigue	Poor co-ordination, impaired spatial judgement, dizziness and vertigo	Tremors, nausea and vomiting, loss of appetite, constipation or diarrhoea
INHALANTS eg. aerosols and other volatile substances	Glassy, glazed or watery eyes	Possible runny nose, may have sores around mouth/nose	Slurred speech and disorientation/confusion Impaired cognitive functioning Perceptual distortions	Lowered inhibitions, excited, giggly. Appear drunk or dazed. Can be agitated and become aggressive usually in response to intervention	Lack of co-ordination, usually slow movements Impaired spatial judgment	Nausea and/or loss of appetite Paint/solvent/chemical fumes or stains on clothing
METHAMPHETAMINES eg. Ice	Dilated or enlarged pupils	Often cold or pale skin at extremities such as hands and feet. Sweating is also possible	Talkative, rapid speech and often jumps from one idea to another quickly and without obvious links	Euphoric, alert, awake, confident, excited but can present as agitated, irritable and or suspicious	Fidgety, pacing and energetic, may fixate on repetitive actions or tasks like cleaning or sorting	Decreased appetite Possible jaw clenching Dry mouth
MDMA (ECSTASY)	Dilated or enlarged pupils	Often cold or pale skin at extremities such as hands and feet Sweating is also possible	Talkative, rapid speech Reflective and engaging	Euphoric, alert, awake, confident and excited Empathic and affectionate towards others Heightened senses	Fidgety and energetic May focus on tactile stimuli	Jaw clenching, teeth grinding, involuntary face-pulling
HALLUCINOGENS eg. LSD, Magic Mushrooms	Dilated or enlarged pupils	Sweating and increased temperature may alternate with chills and shivering	May be withdrawn, confused or speaking nonsense/laughing but may also appear sober at times	May feel euphoric or anxious or seem psychotic/delusional	May exhibit strange movements/walks but not necessarily	Nausea and or vomiting and cramps

DEPRESSANTS: Substances that slow down the activity of the Central Nervous System (CNS) and the messages going between the brain and the body. Depressants can make people feel more relaxed and less inhibited. Using large quantities or multiple depressants can lead to death.

STIMULANTS: Substances that speed up the messages going between the brain and the body. They can make people feel more alert, confident and energetic. Large quantities can cause paranoia, seizures and cardiac arrest.

HALLUCINOGENS: Substances that distort a person's perception of reality. People who use them may see or hear things that aren't really there, or what they do see may be distorted in some way. The effects of hallucinogens vary greatly.

This matrix is a basic guide to assist front line workers to recognise common signs of intoxication. How young people present may be affected by other substances, withdrawal symptoms, mental health, or general health conditions.

If you notice these signs, follow your organisation's policies and procedures.

One of the most easily accessible sources of information is often the young person or their friends. If appropriate, ask them what they have taken.



GOOD PRACTICE

Important - This guide has been designed to complement but not replace your organisational guidelines, policies and procedures – please refer to and follow them.

For further information call YoDAA 1800 458 685 or visit yodaa.org.au