

Lesson 7

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In this lesson, students will learn about stimulants.

Materials Needed: Chalkboard

Step I Ask the students:

*Why are some drugs called **stimulants**?*

Tell the students that a stimulant is any drug that increases the activity of any organ of the body, especially the brain, more than it would be stimulated naturally.

Step II Tell the students that the most commonly used mind-altering drugs of the class called stimulants are **amphetamines** and **cocaine**.

Write on the chalkboard: **Amphetamines**

List the “street names” of these drugs and the harmful effects of using them, as suggested by the students. Their responses should include the following:

Amphetamines:

Speed, Uppers, Bennies, Pep pills, Dexies, Black Mollies (diet pills), Meth, and Crystal

Harmful effects:

Increased blood pressure, loss of appetite, coma, brain damage, hallucinations, paranoia*, convulsions, death from overdose

*Prolonged use can result in the mental condition paranoia, which causes a person to think that he or she is being persecuted by others. Also, this condition may manifest itself in the form of feeling that snakes or insects are crawling over the skin. Although the repeated user may **know** that the bugs are **not** there, he or she may still have the feeling that they are on the skin and as a result, the user may scratch the skin repeatedly, thereby inflicting sores on the face and arms. A person under the influence of amphetamines may become violent.

Step III Write on the chalkboard: **Cocaine**

Repeat the procedure used in Step II for amphetamines. The information about cocaine should include the following:

Cocaine:

Coke, Toot, Snow, and White Lady

Harmful effects:

Sleeplessness, anxiety, damage to the nasal passage, depression, irritability, severe headaches, excessive weight loss, memory problems, brain seizures, death from overdose

Tell the students:

A particularly harmful effect is the extreme compulsion for the person to use the drug again, thereby creating a high risk for addiction. Cocaine is considered to be especially difficult for users to quit taking.

Step IV Write on the chalkboard: **Crack (laboratory-made substitute for cocaine)**

Repeat the procedure used in Step III.

Crack:

Cloud 9, Super White, White Cloud, and Serpico

Harmful effects:

Fatal brain seizures*, high blood pressure*, irregular heartbeat*, chest congestion, black phlegm, chronic cough, damage to the lungs, extreme hoarseness, and parched lips, tongue, and throat

The user may experience radical changes in behavior and personality, such as depression, irritability, short temper, and paranoid feelings that can result in violent or suicidal behavior.

*The likelihood of these serious toxic reactions is increased because a greater amount of cocaine is used in smoking crack than in snorting cocaine through the nose.

Step V Tell the students that use of these stimulants may create a moderate physical dependence and a strong psychological dependence. Remind students that using any of these drugs may result in the development of a tolerance for the drugs, thereby causing the user to increase the dosage frequently.