



Remember, getting someone to hospital quickly could save their life. Call "000" immediately and ask for an ambulance. Police are only called to an overdose if there is any danger to the ambulance officers or the person dies.

In case of an overdose, call an ambulance immediately (Dial "000")

Signs of a cocaine overdose:

- irrational behaviour
- agitation and hostility
- paranoid delusions (e.g. thinking that people are talking about you or are trying to hurt you)
- hallucinations
- fever and fits
- unconsciousness (perhaps as a result of a heart attack or stroke)

If the person is unconscious:

- move them to a safe place if they are in danger
- make sure that an ambulance has been called
- place the person on their side and bend the top leg, bringing it up so it rests in front of their body (this will prevent the person from rolling onto their back)
- check to see that the person is breathing properly. You may need to tilt the head back to open the airways, and also clear the airways if they are obstructed by vomit, etc.
- if the person isn't breathing, perform resuscitation immediately and wait for the ambulance

Help & Information

Help and advice about cocaine in NSW is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week from **The Alcohol and Drug Information Service**. ADIS provides counselling, advice and referral services. You don't have to give your name, and anything you say is confidential. **This service is not connected to the NSW Police Service.**

ADIS Numbers

Sydney metropolitan areas:

9361-8000

Country areas (free call):

1-800-422-599

Phone numbers for other drug and alcohol services and Community Health Centres in your area can be found in the index of the White Pages and your local telephone directory.

In trouble with the law?

Legal Aid Helpline (Freecall): 1800 806 913

Legal Aid Hotline for under 18s (Freecall): 1800 101 810

Aboriginal Legal Service: 02 9318 2122

COCAINE

and the Law



"Street names" for Cocaine

Coke, blow, flake, candy, nose candy, pepsi, coca puffs, "C", Charlie, toot, gold dust, AKA, Vitamin C, snow, girl, glass, the real thing, white lady, o.k., okey doke.

cocaine

Cocaine and The Law

You are breaking the law if you possess, use, make, import or sell cocaine. In NSW, if you are found guilty of possessing or using cocaine, you

could get a fine of up to \$5000, and/or other penalties including community service work or a term in prison of up to 2 years. These penalties apply to both adults and young people aged between 10 and 18 years.

For making, importing or selling cocaine, the penalties are more severe. The severity of the penalty depends on the amount of cocaine, if it was being sold, and if you have prior convictions.

You will get a **criminal record** if you are found guilty of possessing, making or selling cocaine. This makes it hard to get a job, a credit card, or a visa to travel to other countries.

Young Offenders Act 1997 - Drug Amendments

Changes to the *Young Offenders Act* allow police to divert young people aged between 10 and 18 years from the courts for minor drug offences, including the possession of up to one gram of cocaine. Police can now deal with these matters by a formal warning, caution or youth justice conference. The way it is dealt with by the police will depend on the young person, their criminal record and the seriousness of the offence.

What about driving?

It is against the law and dangerous to drive a car or operate machinery under the influence of cocaine or other drugs. Even low doses of cocaine can affect your concentration, coordination and reflexes, and your ability to make sensible decisions. Cocaine also increases risk-taking and careless behaviours.

Police have the power to detain drivers suspected of being under the influence of drugs and have them blood and/or urine tested at a hospital. If you drive under the influence of drugs you could lose your license, get a fine or go to prison.

What is Cocaine?

Cocaine is a white powder extracted from the coca plant. Cocaine is usually sniffed ("snorted"), but it can also be mixed as a drink, or mixed with water and injected.

Crack cocaine has been chemically treated to form small rocks. Crack cocaine can be smoked. Smoking crack ("free-basing") produces a short but powerful "peak" that lasts for 3-5 minutes. It is highly addictive.

What does it do?

Cocaine is a **stimulant**. It speeds up your body and mind so you feel more energetic. It also acts as an anaesthetic that causes your nose and gums to go numb.

After taking cocaine you will feel "high"/good and have more energy. This "peaks" in 10-20 minutes then subsides. The biggest effect is in the first 20 minutes and then it slowly wears off. Injecting cocaine produces an immediate "rush" which lasts for a few minutes and then wears off in about 30 minutes.

Because the good feelings from cocaine last a very short time, people often use it many times a day. If you are injecting the cocaine many times a day, this can damage your veins. If you snort cocaine, it can cause damage inside your nose.

What about long-term or heavy use?

Cocaine is very addictive. Long-term or heavy use leads to addiction. If that happens, buying and using cocaine can take over your life. Eventually, you need cocaine just to feel "normal". You can quickly build up a tolerance to cocaine, which means you need to take more to get the same effect. This can be very dangerous.

Long-term and heavy users of cocaine can also suffer from "cocaine psychosis", a condition which causes paranoia, confusion, depression and hallucinations. Cocaine addicts can become irrational, (e.g. hard to talk to, and they may do silly things) violent and aggressive and often experience the sensation of bugs crawling on or under their skin.

Using cocaine will reduce your performance at work or school. A cocaine addiction can be very expensive and lead to further crime to support the habit. This may damage your relationships with family and friends. Withdrawal from cocaine can also make you depressed and suicidal.

Effects of cocaine:

- increased energy and feelings of exhilaration and euphoria
- increased talking and laughing
- increased sex drive
- feeling little pain or fatigue
- feeling stronger or smarter
- increased risk-taking
- restlessness and problems sleeping
- jaw clenching and teeth grinding
- loss of appetite
- increased heart rate and body temperature.

Effects of long-term or heavy use:

- severe damage to the nose and nasal passage (when "snorted")
- symptoms similar to a bad cold - runny nose, watery eyes etc.
- increased blood pressure
- increased risk of heart disease, heart attack and stroke
- severe weight loss
- fainting and fits
- anxiety and depression
- low sex drive
- the feelings of bugs crawling on or under the skin
- violent, aggressive or irrational behaviour
- "cocaine psychosis" - a condition which causes paranoia, confusion, depression and hallucinations (seeing things that are not real)

Can I reduce the risks?

If you inject cocaine always use **new** needles and other injecting equipment (e.g. spoon, swabs) and never share needles with other users. Sharing needles or using a used needle greatly increases your risk of getting HIV/AIDS, hepatitis B, hepatitis C, and blood poisoning.

If you are going to use cocaine:

- don't use too much. Use a little at first - you can always use more later
- don't take cocaine with alcohol or any other drug
- make sure you're with someone who's not using so they can get help if anything goes wrong
- always use new equipment

What happens if I mix cocaine with alcohol or other drugs?

Taking cocaine with alcohol or other drugs increases the risk of serious health effects as well as the chance of death. Even regular cocaine users are at risk if they mix cocaine with alcohol or other drugs. Snorting or injecting a mixture of cocaine and heroin (a "speedball") can cause you to go into a coma and even die.

What if I use cocaine while I'm pregnant?

Taking cocaine while pregnant is dangerous to your health and that of your unborn baby. It increases your risk of heart disease, high blood pressure, and miscarriage.

Cocaine passes through the placenta to your unborn baby. Your baby can be born drug addicted and suffer from withdrawal and long-term health problems. Pregnant women who are using cocaine should see their doctor or hospital. If you need more information ADIS (see back) can put you into contact with a drugs and pregnancy specialist.

