



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

**If the person is overheated:**

- reduce their body temperature while you wait for help
- apply cold, wet cloths to the head, neck, armpits, and inside leg area near the groin.
- take off any heavy clothing e.g. jackets and jumpers

**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 clear the airways if they are obstructed by vomit, etc.
- if the person isn't breathing, perform "mouth to mouth" immediately and wait for the ambulance.

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 if the person dies.

### Help & Information

Help and advice about ecstasy 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

### What is MDMA?

The chemical name for ecstasy is MDMA: **Methylene-DioxyMethAmphetamine**.

As ecstasy is illegally made, the chemicals in an ecstasy tablet may or may not contain MDMA and may also contain other toxic or harmful chemicals.

**"Street" names:** E, XTC, Eckie, Eggs, Elizabeth, Adam, pink studs, big brown ones, burgers, disco biscuits, grey biscuits, doves (love doves, pink doves, white doves), hug drug, New Yorkers, fantasia, orbit, whizz bombs, yellow dallies.



# ecstasy and the Law





## Ecstasy and The Law

You are breaking the law if you possess, use, manufacture, import or sell ecstasy. In NSW, if you are found guilty of possessing or using ecstasy, you could get a fine of up to \$5,000, 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 manufacturing, importing or selling ecstasy, the penalties are more severe. The severity of the penalty depends on the amount of ecstasy, if it was being sold, and if you have prior convictions.

You will get a **criminal record** if you are found guilty of possessing, manufacturing or selling ecstasy. 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 0.25 of a gram of ecstasy. 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 ecstasy or other drugs. Even low doses of ecstasy can affect your concentration and coordination, affect your thinking and can cause hallucinations (seeing and hearing things that are not real).

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 ecstasy?

Ecstasy and "speed" are drugs made from amphetamines. MDMA is the most popular of the ecstasy drugs because of its stimulant, hallucinogenic and 'feel good' effects. MDMA is what users expect to get when they buy ecstasy. Because ecstasy is an illegally made drug it can contain dangerous chemicals which are not MDMA and, therefore, there is no safe dose.

Ecstasy is usually sold as a small tablet. It can be swallowed, crushed and sniffed, or injected after being mixed with water.

## What does it do?

Ecstasy can cause different effects, depending on how much you take and your size, weight and overall health. Ecstasy changes how you feel. It may make you better but can also make you feel anxious or nervous. It can give you energy for hours. Large amounts can produce hallucinations. Some people have had very bad effects from ecstasy and have died after taking ecstasy.

Depending on the dose, ecstasy starts working within 60 minutes. The effects are strongest in the first 2 hours, and wear off within 12 hours. As it wears off you may experience headaches and feel "burnt-out" and very tired. Depression is common.

### Immediate effects:

- feeling confident, happy, relaxed, uninhibited (do or say things you wouldn't normally)
- confusion, paranoia (thinking that people are talking about you or trying to hurt you), anxiety, panic attacks
- dry mouth and dehydration (not enough water in the body)
- dilated pupils
- jaw clenching and teeth grinding
- upset stomach and vomiting
- reduced concentration and coordination
- hallucinations

## DON'T take ecstasy if you have:

- diabetes
- hepatitis
- high blood pressure
- heart disease
- epilepsy
- asthma
- glaucoma
- hyperthyroidism
- depression
- panic attacks
- mental illness

## What about long-term or heavy use?

Regular or heavy use can cause permanent damage to your liver, heart and brain. Use over long periods increases the risks. You can quickly build up a tolerance to ecstasy, which means you need to take more to get the same effect. This can be very dangerous.

### Effects of long-term or heavy use:

- irrational behaviour (doing silly things or being hard to get along with)
- fits
- physical weakness
- insomnia (problems sleeping) and irritability (being in a bad mood)
- depression and anxiety
- problems having sex or having an orgasm
- intense hallucinations
- death, due to hyperthermia (over-heating) or mixing ecstasy with other drugs.

## Can I reduce the risks?

If you are going to use ecstasy:

- only take one tablet at a time
- leave several weeks between taking ecstasy
- don't take ecstasy 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

- to prevent heat-stroke take regular breaks from the dance floor or other physical activity
- drink small amounts of water frequently (a 600ml bottle of water per hour).

**Note, drinking *too much water* can also be dangerous** as fluid is built up in the body and the brain which can be deadly. Drinking too much water can also damage your kidneys.

## What happens if I mix ecstasy with alcohol or other drugs?

Taking ecstasy with alcohol or other drugs increases the risk of serious health effects, as well as the chance of death. Taking ecstasy with other drugs such as "speed" or LSD can cause psychotic reactions, intense hallucinations and paranoia.

Taking ecstasy and alcohol is especially dangerous, as it raises blood pressure and body temperature and leads to hyperthermia.

As ecstasy is most commonly used at dance parties and raves, heat stroke and dehydration resulting from long periods of dancing can cause you serious damage or death.

## What if I use ecstasy while I'm pregnant?

Because of the unknown chemical make-up of ecstasy, women are advised not to use it during pregnancy. If you need more information ADIS (see back) can put you into contact with a drugs and pregnancy specialist.

