

Illegal Drugs

Medicines are legal drugs if they are used correctly. Illegal drugs are drugs that are not medicines and that are against the law to sell, buy, have or use. Illegal drugs used in any amount can harm your body. Common illegal drugs are cocaine, crack and marijuana.

Effects of Illegal Drugs

Marijuana

Marijuana is made from the hemp plant and is sometimes called grass, weed or pot. It is normally smoked by its users, but it is sometimes eaten in high doses in food rather than smoked.

Side effects

Marijuana has several short and long term effects.

Short term effects

- Distorted perception is the ability to see, hear or become aware of something through the senses which is not correct or it is misleading.
- Causes problems with memory, learning and co-ordination trouble thinking and problem solving,
- Increased heart rate and reduced blood pressure.

Long term effects

- Impairs speech, reading, comprehension and disorientation.
- Causes asthma, heart disease, and lung cancer (burning and stinging of the mouth and throat and causes heavy coughing and lung infections).
- Lowers the body's defenses against other diseases.
- Can also produce anxiety, fear, distrust or panic.
- It affects the brain and interferes with memory, co-ordination, speech, reading with comprehension and problem solving.

Cocaine and Crack

Cocaine comes from the leaves of the cocoa that grows in the Andes Mountains in South America. Cocaine is a fine white powder. It can be inhaled or injected. “Crack” cocaine is a form of cocaine made into small “rocks” by processing cocaine. Both cocaine and crack are addictive drugs.

Side effects

- Increased blood pressure.
- Speeds up breathing and heart beat rate.
- Makes the user violent (can lead to death).
- Users hear and see things that are not there.
- Destroys the inside of the nose.

Using illegal drugs can prevent you from doing well in school and sports. They can stop you from caring about family, friends and important things. These actions hurt everybody around you because the user no longer positively contributes to the family and community. Many innocent people become victims of crime committed by drug users.

Name: _____

Date: _____

A. Bubble in the letter next to the correct answer. (1 pt.)

1. Illegal drugs are _____.
 - (a) drugs that are approved by the authorities.
 - (b) drugs that are not medicines and are against the law to sell.
 - (c) medicines that are used for diabetes.
 - (d) medicine that are used for coughing and lung infection.

2. What is “crack cocaine”?
 - (a) a fine white powder
 - (b) leaves that you can smoke
 - (c) a form of cocaine made in small rocks
 - (d) drug given to you by the hospitals.

B. Write true or false for each sentence. (1 pt.)

3. Marijuana is sometimes called grass, weed or pot. _____

4. Marijuana causes problems with your memory and thinking.

5. Marijuana heals heart disease and asthma. _____

C. Fill in the blanks. Use the words from below to help you. (1 pt.)

addictive	school	cocaine
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- 6. _____ comes from the cocoa plant.
- 7. Both crack and cocaine are _____ drugs.
- 8. The use of illegal drugs can prevent you from doing well in _____.

D. Read the passage then answer the question that follows. (3 pts.)

9. Your best friend offered you some cocaine. They say that it would make you feel good. Using the passage, give **three** (3) reasons why you would tell your friend that taking cocaine is **not** a good choice.

Total pts. – 11