

**RESEARCH
THE RISK.
REDUCE
THE HARM.
COCAINE**

WHAT IS COCAINE?

Cocaine is a stimulant drug that is made from the leaves of the coca plant, native to South America. Cocaine can give the user intense feeling of confidence and energy, as well as paranoia, agitation and aggression.

Also known as:

Coke
Charlie
Bag

Sniff
Marching powder
Flake

LONG TERM RISKS

Dependency - cocaine is highly addictive, especially when used to cope with difficult feelings or situations.

Organ damage - using cocaine can put the heart and other major organs under strain and pressure which, over time, can cause damage.

Hole in the septum – repeated heavy use of cocaine can damage the septum (tissue that divides our nostrils) meaning the tissue will die and leave a hole in its place.

SUPPORT

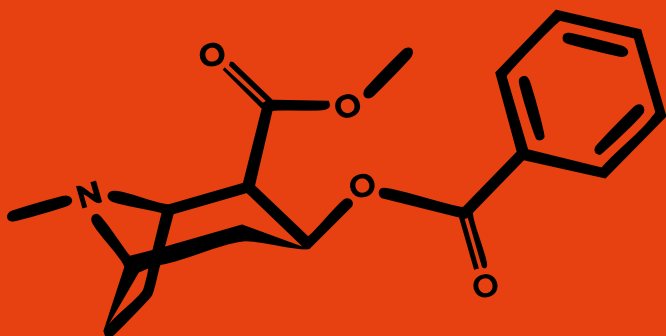
UWE Drugs and Alcohol Service:
1:1 sessions, advice and information
including harm reduction intervention,
goal setting and relapse prevention.

Make an appointment by scanning this QR
code or visiting uwe.ac.uk/drugs-and-alcohol



Bristol Drugs Project:
treatment services for people
who are experiencing a
negative relationship with
drugs and/or alcohol.

Or speak to your GP.



BEFORE

CHECKED YOUR COKE?

- Cocaine is often cut with other chemicals such as Levamisole (de-worming agent for farm animals).
- Using reagent kits or sending samples to WEDINOS can tell you what's in your bag.
- Speak to your specialist drug and alcohol practitioner for more info on drug checking.

CRUSH YOUR COKE

- Lumps of cocaine are not absorbed through the mucus membrane in the nose.
- This can cause irritation and infections.
- Crushing it into a fine powder before snorting can help reduce the damage to the nostrils.
- It can also help control the dose better as you can see how much you're using.
- To avoid the spread of germs, wipe down surfaces and use a clean straw or a post-it note.
- Do not use bank notes to prepare your drugs as they are the most unhygienic option.
- Avoid sharing any snorting equipment to prevent the spread of germs and bloodborne viruses.

KNOW YOURSELF

- If you have a pre-existing health condition such as heart conditions or a seizure disorder, you should avoid cocaine altogether.
- Cocaine can exacerbate a pre-existing mental health condition.
- If you are pregnant do not use cocaine.

DURING

COCAINE AND ALCOHOL

- When cocaine and alcohol are used together, Cocaethylene is produced which is more toxic to the major organs than using each substance alone.
- This greatly increases the risk of harm to the user.
- Cocaine masks the effects of alcohol which can result in drinking far more than you would without the cocaine.
- If you are going to use alcohol, go for low percentage or highly diluted drinks and try to pace yourself.

COCAINE AND OTHER DRUGS

- Taking depressants (GHB/GBL, benzodiazepines such as Valium or opiates such as heroin) with a stimulant like cocaine can be fatal.
- These two drug categories mask each other's effects, meaning people may take more than they would have otherwise.
- As one of the drugs wear off, the other drug may overcome the user and cause overdose.
- Taking cocaine with another stimulant such as MDMA or Amphetamine will increase the overall risk.
- Using cocaine when on MDMA will dissolve the euphoric feeling you have sought out but increase the risk of heart attack or seizure.

START LOW AND GO SLOW

- Start with a small dose, especially if it's a new batch.
- Wait for 30 mins to feel the effects before redosing.

HOW CAN I HELP A FRIEND WHO IS FREAKING OUT?

- If a friend is feeling overwhelmed, go somewhere calm and quiet and encourage them to drink some water.
- If they're panicking, get them to take deep slow breaths, counting in for 4 and out for 6.
- If they feel like they're overheating, take them outside to cool down, take off a layer and hydrate.
- Don't hesitate to call for help if you think that the situation is getting worse, or you're not able to support them. You will not get in trouble.

AFTER

WASH YOUR NOSE OUT

- Wash your nose out with warm water to protect the nostrils from any further damage.

HYDRATE AND EAT WELL

- Drink plenty of water and load up on nutritious food like fruit and vegetables.

REST

- Using any illicit substance disrupts our usual sleep cycle.
- Poor quality of sleep can impact on our immune system, mood and resilience to cope with problems or issues.

SPEAK TO SOMEONE

- If you are feeling anxious or worried in the days after using cocaine speak to your friends or someone you feel comfortable discussing it with.

TAKE A BREAK

- Cocaine can make you feel great, but repeated use weekly or a couple of times a month will diminish the effects.
- This can increase your tolerance and can make you feel like you need to use cocaine every time you socialise.
- It can also make social events less enjoyable and more expensive so try and limit how much you use it.