

WJUSD  
**Teen BE SMART Fact Sheet**

Knowing the Facts = **SMART CHOICES**

# Ecstasy

(E, Adam, X, XTC, Roll, Bean, Eve, MDMA, Thizz, Thizzle)

Ecstasy, or MDMA, is an **ILLEGAL** drug with both psychedelic and stimulant properties. Ecstasy became popular as a "club drug" at night clubs and raves in the 1990's, but in recent years is being used more commonly at house parties and in high schools and colleges. Despite media attention about kids who have died after using Ecstasy, it still has a reputation for being a "safe" drug. Nothing can be further from the truth: Ecstasy can be extremely dangerous. Using Ecstasy affects your brain- impairing senses, memory, judgment and co-ordination. Don't believe the rumors about ecstasy, **BE SMART** and get the facts. Remember- it is up to you to make smart choices. Your health is truly in your hands.

## How does ecstasy work??

Ecstasy primarily affects Serotonin, a brain chemical that regulates mood, emotion, and sleep. Ecstasy use causes a release of large amounts of Serotonin in the brain, causing a feeling of well being. Unfortunately, the body doesn't store Serotonin, so it takes a few days to replenish the body's supply. During that time, with low Serotonin levels, you may feel anxious, depressed and have sleep problems. (See Post Ecstasy Effects)

**MYTH:** Ecstasy is not addictive.

**FACT:** Ecstasy users can become both physically and emotionally dependent on the drug. It is also a gateway drug and can lead to abuse of other drugs.

## Does Ecstasy have any side effects??? You bet it does!

### Immediate side effects include:

- Confusion ~ Nausea ~ Loss of inhibitions
- Involuntary teeth clenching and muscle cramping (bruxism)
- Sweating ~ Dehydration ~ Tremors
- Elevated body temperature ~ Elevated blood pressure and heart rate
- Loss of inhibitions, which can lead to risky behaviors & unintended consequences, such as car accidents and pregnancy.

### Post Ecstasy Effects (depleted Serotonin levels)

- Anxiety ~ Restlessness ~ Sadness
- Sleep problems ~ Irritability ~ Aggression
- Depression ~ Impaired memory

### Overdose symptoms

- High blood pressure ~ Fainting ~ Seizures
- Panic attacks ~ Loss of consciousness

### Long term side effects:

Decreased production of serotonin which can lead to the brain's reduced ability to learn, to retain information and to regulate moods. There is evidence that Ecstasy use over time causes the serotonin receptors to shrink from overuse, which will permanently decrease the body's production of Serotonin.

Research suggests that prolonged use of Ecstasy may cause permanent impairment of working memory and attention processes as well as depression and confusion.



## How can I recognize Ecstasy??

Ecstasy is generally sold as a tablet and comes in many colors. Each tablet usually is imprinted with a logo, such as a smiley face, a cartoon character, or a commercial symbol (Nike, Mercedes). Kids will often refer to the batch of Ecstasy as "pink playboy bunnies" or "green clover leaves".

## Why does Ecstasy lead to dehydration and heat stroke?

Ecstasy causes your body temperature to go up. Combining this with party conditions- big crowds, dancing, alcohol-often leads to the body overheating. Although you might sweat a lot after Ecstasy, it doesn't cool you off. This can lead to severe dehydration or hyperthermia (heat stroke), both of which can become fatal in susceptible individuals.

DO YOU KNOW WHAT YOU'RE GETTING WHEN YOU BUY ECSTASY? PROBABLY NOT.

ECSTASY WILL FREQUENTLY BE LACED, OR ADULTERATED, WITH OTHER DRUGS, MOST COMMONLY: CAFFEINE, EPHEDRINE, COCAINE, PCP, METHAMPHETAMINE, OR DEXTROMETHORPHAN (DMX). OBVIOUSLY, THE ADDITION OF THESE DRUGS CAN ADD TO THE SIDE EFFECTS, DANGERS AND ADDICTION POTENTIAL OF ECSTASY.