DRUG ENFORCEMENT ADMINISTRATION

The Truth About Heroin

Heroin is an illegal and highly addictive drug.

What is heroin?

- It is an opiate drug processed from morphine, a substance extracted from certain poppy plants.
- It appears as a white or brownish powder or a black sticky substance, known as black tar heroin.

Street Names

Big H, Black Tar, H, Horse, Junk, Ska, Smack, Thunder

How is it used?

- It is injected with a needle, smoked or snorted.
- Those who inject heroin **risk infectious diseases** such as HIV/AIDS, hepatitis, liver or kidney disease.

What are the health effects of heroin?*

- It is **addictive both psychologically and physically.** About 23% of persons who use it become dependent. It can slow down breathing. Overdoses can be fatal.
- Chronic users may develop collapsed veins, infection of the heart lining and valves, abscesses, liver or kidney disease.

**Source: drugabuse.gov*

True or False?

- Heroin is less dangerous if you snort or smoke it. **False**

  Fact: There is **no safe** way of using it. You can still **die from an overdose** or become addicted by snorting or smoking it.

- Stopping heroin use is easy. **False**

  Fact: Withdrawal from heroin produces drug cravings, restlessness, muscle and bone pain, chills, nervousness, diarrhea, vomiting, and other symptons that last about a week or months.

Did you know?

- Some people report taking heroin because it is cheaper and easier to obtain than prescription opioids.
  http://www.drugabuse.gov/publications/drugfacts/heroin

- The vast **majority of teens do not use** heroin. In a 2015 national survey, only 0.5% of 12th graders used heroin in the past year.
  Source: University of Michigan, 2015 Monitoring the Future Study.

- **79.8% of teens think** using heroin weekly is very risky. *Source: SAMHSA, 2013 National Survey on Drug Use and Health (NSDUH).*

- Recent trends indicate that heroin use is increasing for persons 18 years of age and older. In 2012, 669,000 persons reported past year use which increased to 681,000 in 2013.
  Source: SAMHSA, NSDUH 2013. CBHSQ report 4-23-15.

- In 2013, 6,000 teens received treatment for heroin addiction; 128,000 young adults (18-25) received treatment for heroin.
  Source: SAMHSA, NSDUH 2013. CBHSQ report 4-23-15.

For drug prevention information, visit DEA's websites:

GetSmartAboutDrugs.com
For parents, caregivers, and educators

JustThinkTwice.com
For teens

dea.gov

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