

# ALCOHOL



## ALCOHOL

It is a compound made by sugar fermentation, most commonly from fruits, corn or potatoes. The active agent in alcohol is ethanol.

### Effects

In lower doses, alcohol uplifts mood and stimulates – often we can observe feelings of euphoria, relaxation and lowered inhibitions. It affects reaction rate, concentration, movement coordination, decision making, judgment, perception of pain etc. In higher doses, it acts as an inhibitor.

High alcohol usage can lead to diseases (including cancer) of digestive system and liver, brain disorders and damage, but also to a variety of mental illnesses. It contributes to obesity, impairs physical condition and appearance (skin dehydration, swellings, skin aging, red face and eyes due to blood vessel expansion).

Alcohol is neurotoxic (it has an adverse effect on the nervous system), during a long-term usage it has a negative effect from a daily dosage corresponding to 1 l of beer or 0.5 l of wine.

Alcohol can be classified as one of the most dangerous substances when comparing the risk of acute and long-term usage and its impact on the body. It also causes addiction with a life-threatening withdrawal syndrome. Overdose may cause death due to inhibition of the centre of breathing and circulation.

Alcohol drinking is riskier when concerning children and adolescents. Their body is still evolving and is therefore more sensitive to negative impact and impairment.

## Risky combination

The risk of the combination of alcohol with other psychoactive substances is difficult to estimate; the combination can amplify some effects and risks.

- G **Different kinds of alcohol** -> alcohol mixing often leads to nausea and worse hangover. Also, the alcohol degradation lasts longer.
- G **Alcohol and marihuana** -> it can amplify the effects with the risk of strong nausea.
- G **Alcohol and suppressive substances and drugs (opiates, benzodiazepines, GHB etc.)** -> the suppressive effects multiply with deadly consequences.
- G **Alcohol and energetic beverages or stimulants (caffeine, cocaine, methamphetamine, MDMA etc.)** -> They seemingly suppress the signs of drunkenness, which leads to excessive consumption. It is highly toxic and there is a reater risk of health complications (dehydration, organ damage etc.)

## Safer use

- E By drinking alcohol more slowly, you can lower the risks.
- E When drinking alcohol, drink also non-alcoholic beverages. For a better hangover, take vitamins and minerals, that lack in the body after alcohol consumption.
- E If you drink hungry, the alcohol absorbs more easily and there is a greater risk of drunkenness.
- E Don't drink low quality drinks, you will feel worse. Beware of distillates from unknown sources, they can contain a life-threatening methyl alcohol.
- E Beforehand, assess the circumstances – where, with whom you will be drinking, how are you feeling, how you will get home (see Set and Setting). You can lower the probability of unpleasant situations (robbery, risky sex, uncontrolled way home etc.)

# DEHYDRATION



## DEHYDRATION

The consumption of psychoactive substances mainly in party environment is connected to a risk of dehydration and overheating. The combination of alcohol or illegal substances with higher activity and often overheated and unventilated space, can be dangerous for a human body. At the same time, persons under the influence of psychoactive substances don't feel thirsty, that would alert them to the lack of liquid in their body.

Dehydration means that there is a sharp loss of body fluids. Important vitamins and minerals leave the body. Just as dangerous is overhydration.

It is recommended to drink 0.5 l per hour you've spent dancing. Optimally, you should drink liquids with high contents of minerals and vitamins. Alcohol, coffee or energy drinks do not help to rehydrate the organism, on the contrary – they contribute to dehydration.

When suffering from a lower level of dehydration, it is sufficient to refill body fluids and give your organism time and quiet for regeneration. In extreme cases of dehydration and overheating (e.g. heatstroke), there can be vomiting, diarrhoea or constipation, overall physical weakness and nausea that can lead up to overall body failure. If these symptoms of overheating and dehydration last, it is necessary to seek medical help.

## Tips and tricks

- ◆ Ideal beverage is mineral water with fruit juices or fruit.
- ◆ Some fruits or vegetables contain a lot of water, so they can refill body fluids and essential vitamins. Pineapple, watermelon, apple, tangerine, orange or cucumber have high content of water.
- ◆ If you drink a lot of pure water, think about refilling minerals, e.g. salty snacks and other food.
- ◆ For organism rehydration, you can use rehydration solutions, that can be obtained in pharmacies or stores with food supplements.
- ◆ Do not underestimate overheating warning signals of your body.
- ◆ During a party, allow your body a regular rest, so that the organism could cool down.



# NEGATIVE IMPACT OF EXCESSIVE NOISE

## NEGATIVE IMPACT OF EXCESSIVE NOISE

Any loud noise, e.g. recorded or live music, can have a negative impact on human health. Permissible level of electronically amplified music at a social event is 95 dB max, at concerts 100 dB. In addition to noise level, the organism is also affected by the length of the stay in a loud environment. Everybody has a different noise sensitivity; therefore, it is necessary to feel your own setting and protect your hearing in an adequate way.

## Risks of excessive noise

- ⌚ Temporary hearing impairment (ringing in your ears, tinnitus, loss of ability to hear clearly etc.)
- ⌚ Permanent hearing impairment (deafness, hearing loss, tinnitus)
- ⌚ It affects nervous activity, reduces sleep quality
- ⌚ It weakens immunity
- ⌚ It increases blood pressure
- ⌚ It can cause digestive disorders etc.

## Tips and tricks to protect your hearing at a party or a concert

- ⌚ Stay further away from noise sources (speakers)
- ⌚ Don't yell into one's ear, you can damage his or her hearing
- ⌚ Protect your hearing using special aids (ear plugs)
- ⌚ After 30 minutes in a loud environment, take a break someplace quiet (e.g. chill-out area, in front of the club, restroom)
- ⌚ Remember that alcohol and other psychoactive substances can lower your perception of loud noises, lower pain threshold and thus increase the risk of hearing impairment.
- ⌚ Tiredness is a good warning signal. Do not underestimate it and don't fight it.
- ⌚ Overheating also increases a risk of impairment, so refill liquids regularly.

# HARD & SMART



## HARD&SMART

Field work in an entertainment environment

The only option to grow and shift contemporary dance scene to new horizons, is to continually penetrate its boundaries. Hard&Smart project sets a goal to create a better and safer entertainment environment.

The project stems in European standards and actual trends of work in this environment. It is led by the principles of Harm Reduction and Safer Clubbing.

Hard&Smart acts in the entertainment environment – it has prepared a 10-point certificate for clubs and open-air events. Meeting this certificate ensures a safe environment for entertainment (security training, safe transport, sex info, hearing protection, dehydration and overheating prevention, trained staff, alcohol info, safe cloakroom, drug info, chill-out area).

Its goal is to reduce risks, that are often linked to the entertainment environment.

## Hard&Smart project workers are at the scene and offer the attendants the following for free:

- ✓ Information and advice (effects of drugs including alcohol, drug combination and side effects prevention; issues concerning safe sex; health, social, criminal law issues)
- ✓ Help with acute health-threatening problems, mental problems (including “bad trip”)
- ✓ Breathalyzer (testing blood alcohol content)
- ✓ Tonometer (measuring heart rate and blood pressure)
- ✓ Material for lowering general risks (condoms, ear plugs, water, fruit)
- ✓ Material for lowering risks during drug using (sniffers, capsules, syringe material, filters for smokers)
- ✓ Organizing of other services and reference to other organizations

# WHAT TO DO WHEN



## WHAT TO DO WHEN

### What to do when you decide to use drugs

If you decide to use a psychoactive substance in the environment of dance and club scene, it is recommended to follow these basic rules that can minimize the risk of negative mental or physical effects.

#### 1. Supplement fluids and minerals

It is recommended to drink 0.5 l of a non-alcoholic beverage per an hour of higher activity. The best option is mineral water, fruit juice or ionic drinks. However, a higher intake of fluids can cause a higher discharge rate of substances necessary for the body, which can be dangerous, so be careful.

#### 2. Get some rest

The most common acute risk is overheating and exhaustion. It is necessary to rest regularly and to feel and not underestimate the warning signals (higher temperature, sweating, shivering, visual, hearing and balance disorders, painful conditions etc.)

#### 3. Stay with friends

It is best to have around someone who didn't use any psychoactive substances and who can summon help if necessary.

#### 4. Don't combine different psychoactive substances

Combination of psychoactive substances is almost always unpredictable and can therefore be dangerous. There is a risk of unpleasant to life-threatening conditions, both mental and physical (anxiety, panic or bad trip, nausea, overheating and dehydration, circulatory system and heart problems, liver and kidney problems, breathing problems, serotonin syndrome, organism shut-down to loss of consciousness). Often, another great risk is brought by the unknown content of the substance including additives.

#### 5. Don't get a higher dose

One ecstasy pill can contain enough of the active substance for one night. Using more pills doesn't lead to better desirable effects, but rather to a greater risk of undesirable effects and overdose, that can lead to death. If the drug you used doesn't start to kick in as usual, it can mean that there are no active substances in the drug or that it contains different substances with a later kick-in. E. g. PMA starts to work four hours after using and can be fatal even in the dose contained in one pill. Therefore, it is safer to use lower doses spaced along a longer time. This holds for the majority of psychoactive substances.

#### 6. Be informed

When you decide to use a psychoactive substance, it is recommended to find as many information as possible concerning this substance (dosage, effects, risks etc.). Find reliable, ideally professional sources.

When obtaining the substance, stay away from unverified sources. By doing so, you can lower the risk of using a different substance or a substance of different strength.

#### 7. Think about tomorrow

Plan ahead and get enough rest after the party. Going to work or lunch with parents right after a party doesn't always have to be pleasant. In addition to a good rest, healthy food and supplementing vitamins and minerals can also help the regeneration. Give your body time to regenerate before heading out to another party. The longer the better.

# SET & SETTING



## SET AND SETTING

The overall course after using a psychoactive substance can be unpredictable and in addition to the effect of the drug, the course can be affected by two important factors, referred to as Set and Setting. These terms are usually linked to the use of psychedelic and similar drugs, but to some extent apply to all psychoactive substances.

### Set

Set can be understood as an overall physical and mental setting of an individual person, therefore their mood, life situation (the more it is mentally challenging, the more challenging can be the effects after using the drug), expectation, tiredness, different neurochemical sensibility to the substance and possible unprocessed trauma from the past etc. Each of these factors can significantly change the mental state and experience during the effect of the substance.

### Setting

Setting can be understood as the environment in which the psychoactive substance is used. In particular, the factors are whether the environment is or isn't familiar and comfortable, choice of people, with whom the substance is used (using with unknown users can bring some problems), including the overall context of using, choice of music etc.

A good set and setting greatly reduces a risk of a so-called bad trip, i.e. an extremely unpleasant experience after using a psychoactive substance. Bad trip starts at the moment when the feeling caused by the substance becomes unpleasant and difficult. Often, there is anxiety or paranoia, disorientation, fear, traumatic experience or transpersonal experience.

# STIMULANTS



## STIMULANTS

Stimulants are substances that stimulate the nervous system and bring physical and mental excitation. At parties, the most common stimulants are cocaine, amphetamine (speed) or methamphetamine. Sometimes, MDMA (ecstasy), and other synthetic stimulants like mephedrone (meow meow) etc. are also included in this category.

### Effects

The effects and behaviour are always individual and it depends on the quantity, quality and content of additives, therefore the next information are relative. The effects of cocaine last 1–2 hours, amphetamine and methamphetamine 4–12 hours and MDMA 3–5 hours.

### Psychological effects

A lot of energy, better concentration, faster thinking, higher confidence, glow and euphoria, higher libido, chattiness, lower inhibitions, lower appetite and need for sleep, restlessness, irritation, paranoia, confusion.

### Physical effects

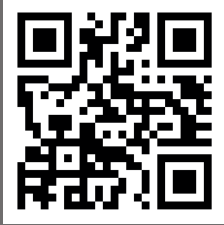
Higher activity, trembling, teeth grinding, dry mouth, hypertension, higher heart and breathing rate, dilated pupils, muscle twitching, different thermoregulation (chills and fever), nausea.

### Risks

- ▲ Stimulants have a high potential for developing a physical addiction.
- ▲ You can easily overrate the limits of your organism and have a worse judgment (dangerous situations, aggression, unwanted sex etc.)
- ▲ Even during one-time use, there is a risk of heart arrhythmia, dehydration, overheating, cramps, exhaustion and organism collapse, panic attack or state of paranoia, toxic psychosis (temporary states of confusion and hallucinations).
- ▲ After the effects comes “crash” (depression, anxiety, insomnia, irritation etc.).

### Safer use

- 🔒 Obtain information about the substance including the dosage in advance. Be sure about the content of the substance you are about to use and avoid substances from unreliable sources.
- 🔒 When using, make sure to drink enough liquid, have enough rest and supplement enough minerals and vitamins.
- 🔒 Don't increase the dosage and avoid long runs. Your body then functions “on credit” and has to take it all back, that usually lasts longer than the run itself. Plan a time and a place for rest and give your body enough time for regeneration, before heading out to another party.
- 🔒 Don't combine different stimulants and don't use any other substances including alcohol or suppressors (including medicine). Stimulants are especially dangerous when combined.
- 🔒 It is not recommended to use stimulants when suffering from mental problems or physical illness (above all heart and circulatory system problems).
- 🔒 Take into account the specific risk of oral ingestion, snorting, smoking or injection (this is the most dangerous).



**H&S**  
Hard and Smart  
Safer party improvement

**TOBACCO  
[CIGARETTES]**

## TOBACCO (CIGARETTES)

The best-known active substance contained in tobacco leaves is nicotine alkaloid. Burning tobacco gives off toxic substances like tar, ammonia, cyanide, nitrogen oxide and sulphur oxide, phenol and many more.

### Effects

During first seconds after smoking, the substances from the smoke get to the brain and affect nicotine receptors. This leads to increased heart rate, higher blood pressure and vascular contraction.

In addition to brain, tobacco affects endocrine glands. It increases production of saliva and digestive juices and increases the activity of the digestive tract.

Nicotine has diverse effects, from stimulating to relaxation and slightly inhibitory effects.

Overdose may cause pupil dilation, turning pale, headache, strong nausea, vomiting or diarrhoea.

Nicotine contained in tobacco causes addiction. Withdrawal brings a variety of unpleasant symptoms.

### Risks

- ☞ Tobacco smoke contains a lot of chemicals that are known carcinogens. Most often, cancer is formed in lungs, pancreas, bladder, lips, tongue, larynx, pharynx, oesophagus and stomach.
- ☞ Respiratory diseases are linked to a higher liability to lung inflammation, lung diseases, that can lead to the incapability to breath without a machine. The airways lose the ability to self-clean.
- ☞ Smoking increases the risk of cardiovascular diseases (due to vascular contraction), gastric ulcers, psoriasis, multiple sclerosis. Men can suffer from infertility and women from risky pregnancy.
- ☞ Smoking deteriorates physical condition and appearance (old skin, yellow skin, bad smell)

### Safer use

- ☞ Try to switch to electronic cigarettes that operate on the principle of a vaporizer. During vaporization the substance is heated, but it doesn't burn.
- ☞ If you roll your own cigarettes, don't forget a filter to filter at least some of the dangerous substances.
- ☞ Most risks of tobacco products are linked to smoking. Chewing tobacco is less risky, but it also bears some risks and its distribution is illegal in many countries.
- ☞ If possible, don't combine tobacco with other substances.
- ☞ Try to avoid smoky places, since passive smoking is also risky

# MARIJUANA



**H&S**  
Hard and Smart  
Safer party improvement

## MARIJUANA (AND OTHER CANNABIS DRUGS)

Marijuana contains a variety of active substances, the most famous is delta-9-tetrahydrocannabinol (THC) and cannabidiol (CBD). The content of these substances and therefore the strength and nature of effects are diverse.

### Effects

The effect kick-in depends on the method of use. When smoking, the effects arrive almost immediately and last 1–2 hours. When eating or drinking, the effects arrive after up to 2 hours and last 3–4 hours.

After use, there is dry mouth, red eyes, sometimes palpitation, nausea or dizziness.

The effects are different, the most common is euphoria, inner bliss, different perception of time, higher appetite. However, the effects can be very different, like tiredness, lower concentration ability, memory problems, fear, anxiety, paranoia, depression.

Higher dosage and strong marijuana can change perception, significantly lower mental and physical performance, mental problems, and rarely even hallucinations.

The nature of the effects depends on the physical and mental state and situation and circumstances (see Set and Setting).

### Risks

The risks related to the most common ways of using marijuana (smoking) are respiratory diseases including asthma and bronchitis and can lead to lung cancer.

The effects of marijuana are higher heart rate and blood pressure. In this respect, it is dangerous for people with heart and circulatory system problems.

Frequent use can cause a short-term memory, attention and motivation impairment, but this should return back to normal during abstinence.

Regular use causes addiction to marijuana.

Marijuana use also increases the risk of a mental illness break-out if the person has a liability.

### Safer use

- ✱ Marijuana use in food or drink is one of the safest method of use. Be careful though, the dosage is difficult to estimate and the effects take a longer time to kick in. You can easily consume a larger amount than you intended.
- ✱ Try less dangerous methods than smoking. A suitable method is vaporisation, during which the material is heated to a higher temperature, but doesn't burn.
- ✱ If you are a smoker, use filters. Commonly used paper filters don't catch harmful substances created during burning, therefore it is better to use cigarette or other special filters. The use of these filters doesn't affect the marijuana effects.
- ✱ Investigate the properties of the marijuana you are using. Individual types can differ in effects, strength and content of active substances. Be careful, there are varieties with a high content of THC and lower or no content of CBD (cannabidiol). CBD inhibits or lightens the psychotic effects of THC.
- ✱ Don't combine marijuana with other substances or medicine. The effects can be unfathomable.

# PSYCHEDELIC DRUGS



## PSYCHEDELIC DRUGS

Psychedelic drugs (or hallucinogens) include LSD, psilocybin (mushrooms), DMT, 5-MeO-DMT, mescaline, 2C-B etc. At music events, the most common are LSD and psilocybin mushrooms.

### Effects

#### Mental effects

Stronger emotional experiencing, sensory hallucinations (change of colours, geometric visions, synaesthesia), abstract thinking, feelings of pulsating environment, vibrations, disturbed reality perception (time, space), introspection and resurfacing of unknown mind content (retraumatisation), change in perception myself, feelings of being connected to the environment. High doses can lead to mystical experience, death of ego, feelings of connecting to the universe or god etc. there can also be paranoia, anxiety and fear.

#### Physical effects

Pupils dilation, higher blood pressure and heart rate, dry mouth, no need to eat or sleep, change of thermoregulation (feelings of cold and hot). Dizziness, trembling, yawning, tingling, tiredness.

Psychedelic drugs are not addictive. Most of them are not physically or nerve toxic.

### Risks

- ⦿ After using, you can experience a bad trip, i.e. a strong and unpleasant diverse effect – anxiety, disorientation, fear, transpersonal experience, unpleasant physical experience etc.
- ⦿ It is not recommended to use psychedelic drugs when suffering from heart diseases or high blood pressure.
- ⦿ It can be a trigger to latent psychosis for people liable to psychotic illness (two generations back).
- ⦿ It is risky to combine psychedelic drugs with other substances, above all with marijuana, stimulants, tramadol, antidepressants (SSRI, IMAO).
- ⦿ There can be a flashback, that is a temporary state occurring when sober and can bring back feelings experienced during the trip.

### Safer use

- 👁️ Don't combine it with other substances, the effects are unfathomable.
- 👁️ Stay with another, ideally sober, person. Don't be afraid to ask for help with handling a bad trip. Challenging states can be handled by physical comfort, deep breaths or mindfulness techniques.
- 👁️ Take into account your SET (state of mind, current experiencing, health and experience) and SETTING (environment, people, music etc.)
- 👁️ Get informed about the substance including the dosage in advance. Make sure you know the content of the drug you are about to use and stay away from unreliable sources.

**Interesting links:** [czeps.org](http://czeps.org), [psychonautwiki.org](http://psychonautwiki.org), [tripsit.me](http://tripsit.me)



**H&S**  
Hard and Smart  
Safer party improvement

# SEXUALLY TRANSMITTED DISEASES (STDs)

## SEXUALLY TRANSMITTED DISEASES (STDs)

### Gonorrhoea

It is transmitted through unprotected sex, anal and oral sex without condom.

The symptoms are burning sensation during urination, vaginal discharge and discharge from the penis or rectum (2–7 days after infection). 50 % of infected people don't show any symptoms, this, however, doesn't diminish the consequences of the disease.

If untreated, the disease leads to more serious infections, genital damage and infertility. During pregnancy, there is a risk of complications, abortion and infection of the baby during delivery (it can cause blindness, serious malformations and death).

It is treated by special antibiotics effective within a few days, usually at home.

### Syphilis

Syphilis is transmitted through unprotected sex, anal or oral sex without condom, but even through small skin or mucosa injuries. It is therefore possible to get infected by giving a hand job.

1. At the site of infection (genitals, mouth, hand, rectum), a small lesion or a hard and painless ulcer are formed after 2–6 days. These primary symptoms vanish, but the illness stays in the body.
2. An infectious red-brown rash as well as blisters covered with grey-white layer occur few weeks later in the genital, groin and armpit areas.
3. Syphilis attacks internal organs, skin, cardiovascular system, motion and circulatory system and can result in death.

In the first and second stage, syphilis is treated by antibiotics and can be cured completely. The third stage is untreatable.

## HIV (Human Immunodeficiency Virus), AIDS

HIV is transmitted through blood, sperm or vaginal fluid and from mother to child (during pregnancy, delivery or breastfeeding). Any unprotected sex is risky: vaginal, oral, and above all anal, since there can occur some injuries and contact with blood.

The primary symptoms occur after ca. 3 weeks from infection (diarrhoea, fever, swollen nodules), but don't have to occur at all. The only certain indicator is a laboratory test. The risk of infecting another person is higher right after the infection.

HIV causes immune failure and leads to AIDS. The organism then becomes vulnerable to other infections and tumours, which result in death.

HIV can be treated in order to decrease the risk of developing AIDS and it prolongs the life expectancy. However, it is not possible to cure an HIV positive person.

### Other STDs

Other STDs are for example chlamydia, trichomoniasis, genital herpes or papillomavirus (agent of genital warts and cervical cancer).

### Prevention

The best prevention is using condoms during sex. Tests, regular examination at the gynaecologist, urologist or dermato-venerologist, HIV/AIDS centres or consulting centres are also a good prevention.

### Venereal disease and law

Deliberate spread of STDs is punishable. The prison sentence can be from 6 months up to 12 years. Czech legislative regulates the spread of venereal diseases in the law no. 40/2009 Col. of the criminal code.



# RISKY SEX

## RISKY SEX

### ♥ Don't let anybody force you into anything

To sex or sexual practices you don't approve of.

### ♥ Don't let drunkenness get into your head

Alcohol reduces the ability to read situations, environment, persons and their behaviour realistically and it removes your inner barriers. What you would refuse when sober, can tempt you when drunk. Try to bear that in mind. If you are not sure, don't be afraid to refuse.

### ♥ Choose a place with respect to your safety

If you decide to have sex, take some time to find the right place – somewhere private (at your or his/her place, in a hotel) with better hygiene, or at the club or outside. Find pros and cons.

### ♥ Take age into account

Sometimes, it is not easy to guess the right age. But from a legislative viewpoint, sex with a girl or boy under 15 can lead to a lot of trouble – for example in the form of suspended or unconditional sentence. You can think about how you can verify your partner's age.

### ♥ Carry protection

There is no reliable method on how to tell if someone is healthy. And you can't always be sure that your partner will have a condom. Hormonal contraception doesn't protect you from diseases, and if it is to prevent pregnancy, it has to be taken regularly.

### ♥ Even oral sex is risky

You can get many sexually transmitted diseases like gonorrhoea, syphilis, herpes virus and HIV (one tiny injury in the mouth or genital mucosa is enough). You can also catch papillomavirus (HPV), the agent of genital warts and cervical cancer.

### ♥ What to do when you suspect that you've been infected

The majority of diseases can be cured by antibiotics, if it is caught early. Test and treatment is done at dermatovenerology. Women can visit their gynaecologist, for men there are urologists. However, there can be no symptoms. So if you are worried, because you weren't protected for instance, go and get yourself tested. Even HIV can be treated better, if it is caught in early stages.

### ♥ Prevention and transmission risks

Sexually transmitted diseases are usually transmitted during sex. Risk factors include many sexual partners, insufficient hygiene before and after sex. The disease can be transmitted during a direct contact with infected blood or from mother to foetus.

The best prevention is using condoms during sex. Tests, regular examination at the gynaecologist, urologist or dermatovenerologist, HIV/AIDS centres or consulting centres are also a good prevention.