COCAINE & CRACK

WHAT IS COCAINE?

Cocaine is a purified extract derived from the leaves of the Erythroxylon coca bush. This extract is chemically processed to produce powdered cocaine and crack cocaine.

Crack cocaine has a rock or crystal-like form and may be white or off-white in color.
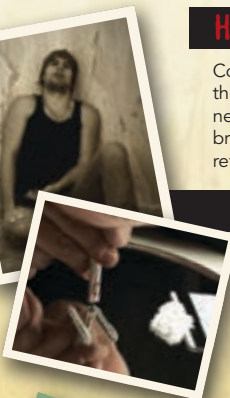
HOW DOES IT WORK?

Cocaine interferes with the neurotransmitters in the brain, preventing them from binding to other neurons. As a result, these chemicals build up in the brain and cause a feeling of euphoria – what users refer to as the "high."

HOW IS IT USED?

Powdered cocaine may be:

- **Inhaled (snorted) through the nose.**
- **Dissolved in water and injected.**
- **Rubbed onto mucous tissues.**

Crack is heated and the fumes are inhaled.

IN THE SHORT-TERM, COCAINE CAUSES:

- Euphoria
- Increased energy and alertness
- Dilated pupils
- Bizarre or violent behavior
- Neurological effects, like strokes, headaches, or seizures
- Death

WITH LONG-TERM USE, COCAINE CAUSES:

- Tolerance and addiction
- Brain damage
- Full-blown psychosis
- Bowel gangrene
- Malnourishment
- Death

COCAINE IS DANGEROUS!

- The effects of cocaine come on almost **instantaneously.**
- Highs are intense, but **only last 5 to 30 minutes**.
- People use the drug **more frequently** to maintain the high.
- Tolerance and addiction may **develop in a short amount of time.**

STATISTICS

- Over **1.1 million Americans** abuse or are dependent on cocaine.
- Cocaine is involved in **450,000 to 550,000** emergency department visits every year.
- Overdoses cause **about 5,000 deaths** every year in the U.S.
- Cocaine users are **25 times** more likely to experience sudden death when they combine the drug with alcohol.

SIGNS OF COCAINE USE OR ABUSE:

- Dilated pupils
- **Increased energy, activity, and restlessness**
- Excited speech
- **Constant runny nose and/or sniffling**
- Erratic mood swings
- **Excessive sweating and the chills**
- Extreme weight loss
- **Withdrawing from friends and family**
- Loss of interest in activities, hobbies, or pastimes
- **Sudden financial problems**

COCAINE – IT'S NOT WHAT IT'S CRACKED UP TO BE!