



WHAT IS CRACK?

Crack is a highly addictive illegal stimulant, processed from powdered cocaine into white or off-white “rocks” (which is why it is sometimes called “crack rock”). It can be smoked or mixed with other drugs. Crack is typically smoked from a glass pipe, which a person uses to heat the “rocks” and inhale the vapor.

The drug gained notoriety during the so-called “crack epidemic” of the late 1980s and early 1990s when it became widespread in cities across the United States. Since it was easy to produce, dealers could sell it cheaply at first, knowing that as people became quickly addicted to it, users would begin to pay more and more to get their fix.

The use of crack has steadily grown since its introduction due to its portability, relatively low cost, and quick effects. It’s highly potent, incredibly dangerous, and can leave a person seriously addicted after just one use.

QUICK HIGHS, INTENSE LOWS

Because it is inhaled directly into the lungs and quickly reaches the brain, crack produces an almost immediate euphoric high described as “feeling invincible.” The high is short-lived, however, lasting only about 10-15 minutes. After it subsides, users experience a severe crash that long outlasts the high itself, with feelings of depression, anxiety, and intense craving for more of the drug.

In order to experience the intense high again, as well as to avoid the pain of coming down, users increasingly require more crack on a regular basis. Users soon begin to experience sleeplessness, as well as paranoia, agitation and anger – even when they aren’t high.



Over 10 million people in the US have used crack in their lifetime. Of this number, more than 500,000 people have used the drug in the past month.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

SAMHSA National Helpline

1-800-662-HELP (4357)

The National Helpline is available 24/7, 365 days a year and is staffed by trained specialists who can help callers connect with treatment resources in their state or area.

CRACK:

WRECKS YOUR MIND,
BODY, AND LIFE



in the know

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CRACK WRECKS YOUR BODY

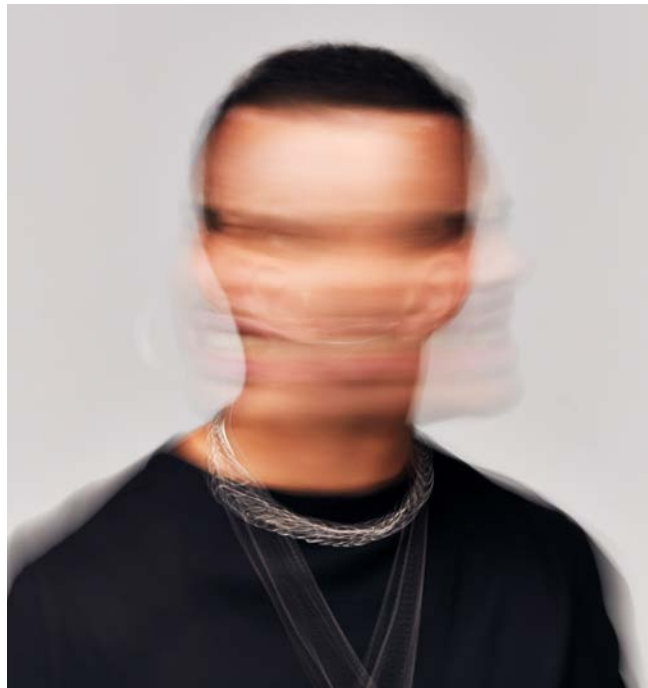
Like the high it produces, crack can have almost immediate effects on the body. Although not common, it's possible to experience heart failure, seizures, stroke, and even death after just one use. Some of the more common and immediate physical effects include:

- *Increased blood pressure, heart rate, and body temperature*
- *Contracted blood vessels*
- *Tremors, convulsions, nausea, and vomiting*
- *Increased rate of breathing*
- *Dilated pupils*
- *Loss of appetite*
- *Tactile hallucination that creates the illusion of bugs burrowing under the skin*

Over time, the physical side effects become more dangerous and can lead to death. These include:

- *Permanent damage to blood vessels of ear and brain*
- *Liver, kidney, and lung damage*
- *Severe chest pains*
- *Respiratory failure*
- *Malnutrition, weight loss*
- *Severe tooth decay*
- *Auditory and tactile hallucinations*
- *Sexual problems, reproductive damage, and infertility (for both men and women)*
- *Reduced ability to fight off infections*
- *High blood pressure, leading to heart attacks, strokes, and death*

CRACK WRECKS YOUR MIND



Crack is known for rapid and intense highs and equally intense lows. Even short-term use produces many unwanted mental side effects, such as:

- *Hyperstimulation*
- *Bizarre, erratic, sometimes violent behavior*
- *Hallucinations, hyperexcitability, irritability*
- *Intense euphoria*
- *Anxiety and paranoia*
- *Depression*
- *Intense drug craving*
- *Panic and psychosis*

Over time, many crack users suffer from cocaine psychosis, becoming paranoid and unsure about what is real and what isn't. Long-term impacts on the brain include:

- *Disorientation, apathy, confused exhaustion*
- *Irritability and mood disturbances*
- *Increased frequency of risky behavior*
- *Delirium or psychosis*
- *Severe depression*
- *Tolerance and addiction (even after just one use)*

CRACK WRECKS YOUR LIFE



Crack users may find it difficult to function at school or work. They can lose interest in their family, friends, and the activities they once enjoyed. As they become more addicted, users often get in trouble with the law, turning to robbery, prostitution, and even murder to pay for their habit. Not only does the promiscuity and prostitution

associated with crack use lead to an increased risk of AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases, the obsession with getting more drugs can cause users to ignore serious medical problems.

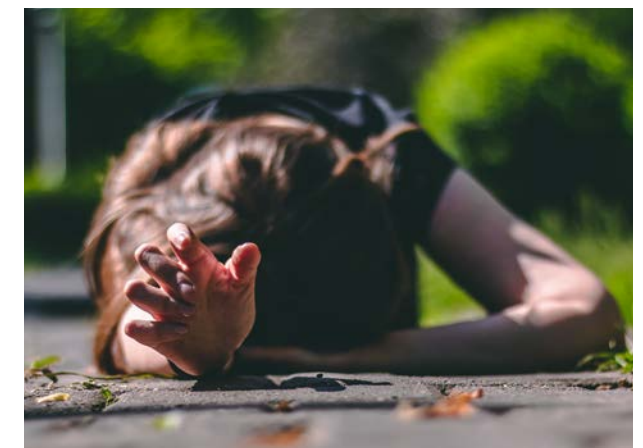
WITHDRAWAL

The consequences of crack withdrawal are severe and can even cause individuals to attempt suicide. Withdrawal symptoms can include:

- *Intense cravings*
- *Tremors*
- *Changes in brain activity*
- *Eating disorders*
- *Sleep disturbances*
- *Depression*
- *Paranoia*

It's for these reasons that many users will go to any lengths to get their next fix. The unfortunate reality of withdrawal from addiction is that users will literally chase this high to the grave.

The best way to avoid a life of addiction, pain, and suffering is to never start using this dangerous drug!



The best way to avoid a life of addiction, pain, and suffering is to never start using this DANGEROUS DRUG!