



### More Hallucinogen Hype

Every few years a new “wonder” drug promises great experiences with very little said about the harmful effects. Two recent examples are Ecstasy and herbal Ecstasy. Drug dealers pushing these substances promised they were problem-free. Medical research has since shown that these drugs carry serious risks to a user’s physical and psychological well-being. Unfortunately, many people lost their lives before they got the message.



Along comes *Salvia divinorum* (SAL-vee-ah dee-vin-OR-um), a plant that is indigenous to the mountains of Mexico. The Mazatec Indians used *Salvia* to induce visions during tribal rituals. Now people in the United States are using it recreationally—and many are getting hurt.

Law enforcement officials are monitoring the use of *Salvia* in this country. As the concern grows, they may add it to the list of illegal drugs as defined by the Controlled Substances Act.

In the meantime, Web sites and “head shops” are looking to make a few fast dollars from people gullible enough to buy into the hype. They gloss over the possible health hazards, but the reality is that the price of a *Salvia* “trip” could be very high. It is a powerful drug that is already proving psychologically and physically dangerous, although it hasn’t been around long enough for its full hazards to be understood.

Some early users of LSD, mescaline, Ecstasy, and ketamine paid with their lives, physical health, and sanity for being the first to try the newest drug craze. If you experiment with *Salvia*, you might do the same—and “Guinea pig” isn’t much to put on a tombstone.

**More About *Salvia***  
[www.intheknowzone.com/salvia/what.html](http://www.intheknowzone.com/salvia/what.html)



### For More Information

Go to **[www.intheknowzone.com](http://www.intheknowzone.com)** for more information about substance abuse. Increase your knowledge with the statistics, images, and links. Test your understanding with the quick quizzes.



**Don’t stay in the dark.  
Get In the Know!**

***in the know***

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# Salvia divinorum

*don't be a guinea pig*

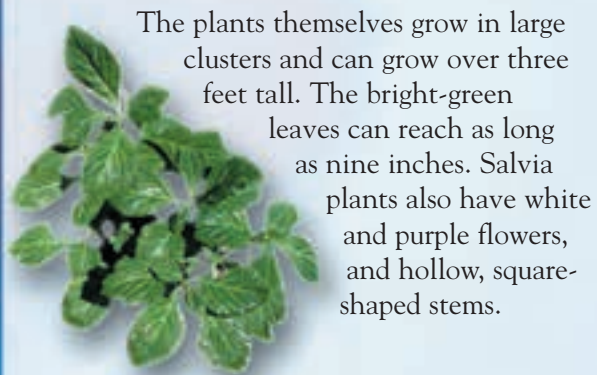




### What is Salvia divinorum?

Salvia divinorum is a plant that resembles sage. A member of the mint family, it can grow indoors or outdoors in warm, humid climates.

### What does it look like?



#### Salvia Images

[www.intheknowzone.com/salvia/images.html](http://www.intheknowzone.com/salvia/images.html)

### What are the street names?

Salvia divinorum is commonly shortened to just Salvia. Diviner's sage, Maria Pastora, Sage of seers, and Ska Maria Pastora are also terms for the drug.



### How is Salvia used?

Salvia users take the drug in several forms. Fresh leaves can be wadded together and chewed, while dried leaves can be smoked. Salvia is also brewed as a tea, or converted into a liquid extract and then vaporized for inhalation.

### How does Salvia work biologically?

The active chemical in Salvia is called Salvinorin A. It takes only a small amount, just 200 to 500 micrograms, to produce strong effects. Scientists have yet to pinpoint exactly which brain receptors react with Salvinorin A, but they have determined it to be a "psychoactive" substance, affecting both moods and mental processes.

#### Chemistry of Salvia

[www.intheknowzone.com/salvia/chemistry.html](http://www.intheknowzone.com/salvia/chemistry.html)

### Short-term Effects

Hallucinations are the primary effect of Salvia. Users see and hear things that are not there in the same way as taking other hallucinogens like LSD, mescaline, or ketamine. The effects of taking Salvia can last anywhere from 3 to 8 hours, depending on the method of use and dosage amount. The higher the dose, the stronger the hallucinogenic effects. Losing consciousness is a possibility at higher dosage levels.

Users report an inebriated feeling, similar to drinking alcohol, causing slurred speech and loss of coordination. This puts Salvia users at risk for harming themselves or others, especially while driving.

Salvia abusers also risk a "bad trip." What they see and hear may be horrifying instead of funny or interesting. Many people have reported such a negative initial experience with Salvia that they would not use it again.

### Long-term Effects

The psychoactive nature of Salvia makes the drug hazardous to a user's mental health.

Just like LSD and other hallucinogens, "flashbacks" have been reported by Salvia abusers. A flashback is when a user experiences the disorienting and unpleasant effects of Salvia weeks or months after taking the drug.

Depression and schizophrenia are also real risks of Salvia abuse. Some users lose touch with reality completely and permanently.

#### Long-term Effects of Salvia

[www.intheknowzone.com/salvia/longterm.html](http://www.intheknowzone.com/salvia/longterm.html)

### Salvia Addiction? Physical vs. Mental

Hallucinogens tend to be psychologically addicting. However Salvia may be physically addictive, not enough research has been done to know. Even some of the Web sites that sell the drug admit that addiction is a distinct possibility. Your best bet? Stay away from Salvia.

### Can you overdose on Salvia?

With small quantities of Salvia having such powerful effects, it would seem that overdose is a possibility. But there are no known cases of taking a lethal dose of Salvia. It is known that taking too much at one time can render a person unconscious, and there is also the risk of having a fatal accident.

### Buyer beware!

Web sites or head shops that hype the benefits of Salvia are not telling the whole story. They want to sell the drug and make money, so they downplay the harmful effects of Salvia. Make sure you read the fine print before buying into the hype about Salvia. Otherwise, you may be selling your own life short.

