



## Drug Safety & Drug Facts:

**Empowering change through education and self-agency:** Understanding the facts about drugs and their effects is crucial for making informed decisions. This safety facts sheet aims to provide accurate information about common substances, their risks, and safety tips to help you and your loved ones stay informed and safe.

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Substance use disorder affects **millions** of people **worldwide**, regardless of age, gender, or socioeconomic status. It is a widespread public health concern that **requires intervention and support**.

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### Safety Tips & Harm Reduction:

#### **KNOW THE SIGNS OF OVERDOSE:**

Symptoms may include confusion, chest pain, difficulty breathing, severe nausea, and loss of consciousness.

**Action:** Call emergency services immediately if you suspect an overdose.

**UNDERSTAND PEER PRESSURE:** Peer pressure can take many forms, from direct offers to subtle suggestions or exclusion. Educating students on what constitutes peer pressure can give them the experience to know when and how to diffuse situations around substance use, and to say no to substance involved activities.

**Action:** Avoid substance involved activities, practice saying no and promote self-confidence in informed decision making.

**OPEN COMMUNICATION:** Talk openly about substance use with family and friends. Honest conversations can reduce stigma and promote healthier choices.

**Tip:** Use empathetic language and listen without judgment.

#### **RESOURCES INFORMATION:**

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration

**(SAMHSA): 1-800-662-HELP (4357)**

National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA):  
[www.drugabuse.gov](http://www.drugabuse.gov)

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC): [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov)

## Common Drugs & Safety Tips:

**ALCOHOL:** A legal depressant commonly consumed in social settings.

**Short-term Effects:** Impaired judgment, coordination, and reaction time; slurred speech; nausea.

**Long-term Effects:** Liver disease, cardiovascular problems, addiction, and mental health issues.

**Safety Tips:** Consume in moderation, never drink and drive, and know your limits.

**CANNABIS (MARIJUANA):** A psychoactive drug derived from the Cannabis plant, used for both medicinal and recreational purposes.

**Short-term Effects:** Euphoria, altered perception, impaired memory and coordination.

**Long-term Effects:** Respiratory issues, mental health problems, habit-forming.

**Safety Tips:** Use in a safe environment, avoid operating machinery, and be aware of and follow the legal age and regulations.

**PRESCRIPTION DRUGS (OPIOIDS, STIMULANTS, DEPRESSANTS):** Medications prescribed for pain relief, ADHD, anxiety, and sleep disorders.

**Short-term Effects:** Pain relief, increased focus, relaxation, drowsiness.

**Long-term Effects:** Can be addictive, increased-tolerance, withdrawal symptoms, organ damage.

**Safety Tips:** Only use as prescribed, do not share medications, and store securely.

**NICOTINE:** An addictive substance found in tobacco products such as cigarettes, e-cigarettes, and chewing tobacco.

**Short-term Effects:** Increased heart rate, heightened alertness, reduced appetite.

**Long-term Effects:** Lung cancer, heart disease, highly-addictive, respiratory issues.

**Safety Tips:** Avoid use, seek help for quitting, and be aware of secondhand smoke risks.

**COCAINE:** A powerful stimulant drug that is illegal and highly addictive.

**Short-term Effects:** Euphoria, increased energy, hyperactivity, increased heart rate.

**Long-term Effects:** Heart problems, mental health issues, highly-addictive, nasal damage.

**Safety Tips:** Avoid use, seek immediate help if craving, and be aware of overdose risks.