Psychoactive Drugs

Chapter 23 Lesson 4
Classification of Psychoactive Drugs

- Psychoactive drugs are chemicals that affect the nervous system and alter activity in the brain
- Some of these drugs have medicinal value when properly used, however, even under a doctor's supervision, they carry risks
- The effects on the developing brain and body of a teen can be especially damaged
- There are 4 main groups of psychoactive drugs
  - Stimulants
  - Depressants
  - Narcotics
  - Hallucinogens
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Types of Drugs</th>
<th>Consequences to Your Health</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cocaine</td>
<td>• Nausea, abdominal pain, malnutrition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Chest pain, respiratory failure, death</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Headache, stroke, seizure, heart attack, death</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Exposure to HIV through contaminated needles</td>
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<tr>
<td>Crack</td>
<td>• Extreme addiction, with the same effects as pure cocaine</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Rapid increase in heart rate and blood pressure can cause death</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amphetamines</td>
<td>• Decreased appetite, weight loss, and malnutrition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• High blood pressure, rapid heart beat, heart failure, death</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Loss of muscle coordination, delirium, panic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Aggressiveness, increased tolerance, addiction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Methamphetamine</td>
<td>• Memory loss, heart and nerve damage</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Increased tolerance, addiction</td>
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<td>Consequences to Your Health</td>
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<td>---------------------</td>
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<tr>
<td>Barbiturates</td>
<td>• Reduced heart rate and blood pressure</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Fatigue, confusion, impaired muscle coordination</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Impaired memory, loss of judgment</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Reduced respiratory function, respiratory arrest, death</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tranquilizers</td>
<td>• Depression, unusual excitement, fever, irritability</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Loss of judgment, dizziness</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rohypnol (date rape drug)</td>
<td>• Confusion, inability to remember what happened</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Decreased blood pressure, drowsiness, gastrointestinal disturbances</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GHB</td>
<td>• Drowsiness, nausea, vomiting, loss of consciousness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Impaired breathing, coma, death</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Opium</td>
<td>• Nausea, constipation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Morphine</td>
<td>• Rapid onset of tolerance, addiction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heroin</td>
<td>• Confusion, sedation, unconsciousness, coma</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Codeine</td>
<td>• Reduced respiratory function, respiratory arrest, death</td>
</tr>
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</tbody>
</table>
| PCP                 | • Loss of appetite, depression  
                      • Panic, aggression, violent actions  
                      • Increased heart and respiratory function                                                                                                                                 |
| LSD                 | • Delusions, illusions, hallucinations, flashbacks, convulsions, coma, and death                                                                                                                                     |
| Ecstasy (MDMA)      | • Confusion, depression, paranoia, muscle breakdown                                                                                                           |
| Ketamine            | • Kidney and cardiovascular system failure, death  
                      • Memory loss, numbness, impaired motor function  
                      • Nausea, high blood pressure, fatal respiratory reaction                                          |
Health Risks of Stimulants

• **Stimulants** are drugs that speed up the central nervous system
• Some foods, such as coffee, tea, and cola, contain small amounts of a stimulant called caffeine
• The nicotine in tobacco products is also a stimulant
• Sometimes, stimulants are prescribed for specific medical conditions, for example, the medication used to treat hyperactivity
• Although some stimulants have medical uses, many of these substances are used illegally
• The most dangerous of the illegal stimulants are cocaine, amphetamines and methamphetamine
Cocaine

- Cocaine is a rapid-acting, powerful, highly addictive stimulant that interrupts normal functioning of the central nervous system.
- Cocaine is a white powder extracted from the leaves of a coca plant.
- Cocaine users can experience a surge of self-confidence and euphoria, a feeling of intense well-being or elation.
- Effects of cocaine can last from 20 minutes to several hours.
- The feeling of confidence induced by cocaine use is followed by an emotional letdown.
- Regular use can lead to depression, fatigue, paranoia, and physiological dependence.
• Cocaine use can cause malnutrition and, especially among teens, cardiac problems
• When cocaine is snorted, it shrinks the tiny blood vessels in the nose
• Repeated use can lead to collapse of the nasal septum, the wall dividing the 2 halves of the nose
• When users inject cocaine, they risk contracting HIV or hepatitis B from infected needles
• Overdosing can result in cardiac arrest, respiratory failure, seizures, and death
Crack

• An even more dangerous form of cocaine is crack
• Also known as crack cocaine, rock, or freebase rock, crack is one of the most deadly drug available
• It is a very pure form of cocaine that reaches the brain seconds after being smoked or injected
• Once in the blood, it causes heart rate and blood pressure to soar to dangerous levels
Amphetamines

- Amphetamines are stimulants used in prescription medicines to reduce fatigue and drowsiness or to suppress the appetite.
- However, some people use amphetamines illegally to stay awake and alert, to improve athletic performance, or to lose weight.
- Regular use can result in twitching, irregular heart beat, paranoia, and heart and blood vessel damage.
Methamphetamine is a stimulant used in treating certain diseases, including Parkinson’s disease and obesity. It is a white, odorless powder that easily dissolves in alcohol or water. Because it is produced in make shift labs, the drug is readily available, but its quality is uncertain. Meth may provide a short-term feeling of euphoria. Often this drug results in depression, paranoia, damage to the central nervous system, increased heart rate and blood pressure, and damage to the brain cells. Can also cause death.
Health Risks of Depressants

- **Depressants**, or sedatives, are **drugs that tend to slow down the central nervous system**
- Depressant drugs relax muscles, relieve feelings of tension and worry, and cause drowsiness
- They can be dangerous because they slow the heart rate, lower blood pressure to dangerous levels, and interrupt the normal rate of breathing
- One of the most commonly used depressant is alcohol
- 2 types of sedative medications are barbiturates and tranquilizers
Barbiturates

- Barbiturates belong to a family of sedative-hypnotic drugs, or drugs that induce sleepiness
- Barbiturates can result in mood changes, sleeping more than normal, and coma
- They are used illegally to produce a feeling of intoxication and to counteract the effects of stimulants
- Combining with alcohol can be fatal
Tranquilizers

- Tranquilizers are depressants that reduce muscular activity, coordination, and attention span
- Tranquilizers are prescribed to relieve anxiety, muscle spasms, sleeplessness, and nervousness
- When tranquilizers are overused, physiological and psychological dependence occurs
- Withdrawal causes severe shaking, in extreme cases, coma or death occur
Rohypnol

• A widely available club drug
• This depressant, which is 10 times as strong as tranquilizers, is better known as the date rape drug, used in crimes of dating violence
• Rohypnol comes in tablet form and looks like ordinary aspirin
• Rohypnol dissolves in carbonate beverages and may easily be slipped into a soft drink
• The victim wakes up much later with no recollection of what may have happened during the last several hours
• Unplanned pregnancies or exposure to HIV and STDs can result from such situations
Another club drug is gammahydroxy butyric acid. Like rohypnol, it has been used in date rape crimes. GHB is available as a clear liquid, a white powder, and in a variety of tablets and capsules. A person can easily overdose on GHB. The drug leaves the blood relatively quickly, making it hard for emergency room personnel to determine that an overdose has occurred.
Narcotics

- Narcotics are specific drugs derived from the opium plant that are obtainable only by prescription and are used to relieve pain
- Morphine, OxyContin, and codeine are examples of narcotics
- Morphine is sometimes prescribed by medical professionals, and codeine is an ingredient in some cough medications
- These drugs relieve pain by blocking pain messengers in the brain
- Narcotic use can cause euphoria, drowsiness, constipation, pinpoint pupils, slow and shallow breathing, convulsions, coma and death
- Because narcotics are so addictive, pharmacists are required to keep records of all sales of these drugs
Heroin

- Heroin, a highly addictive narcotic, is a processed form of morphine that is injected, snorted or smoked
- Heroin depresses the central nervous system and slows breathing and pulse rate
- Infectious diseases such as pneumonia, HIV, and hepatitis B can result from the use of infected needles
- Large doses may result in coma or death
- Withdrawal can be very painful
- Fetal death may occur if the user is pregnant
Hallucinogens

- Hallucinogens are drugs that alter moods, thoughts, and sense perceptions including vision, hearing, smell and touch
- These drugs have no medical use
- Phencyclidine (PCP), lysergic acid diethylamide (LSD), ketamine, and Ecstasy are examples of powerful and dangerous hallucinogens
- These drugs overload the sensory controls in the brain
- The brain then confuses and intensifies sensations and hallucinates
• Hallucinogens also impair judgment and reasoning and increases heart and respiratory rates
• The altered mental states caused by hallucinogens can last for several hours or several days
• The effects are extremely unpredictable, and users sometimes harm themselves physically or demonstrate other violent behaviors
PCP

- PCP is considered one of the most dangerous of all drugs, and its effects vary greatly from user to user.
- Users report distorted sense of time and space, increased muscle strength, inability to feel pain.
- Overdoses of PCP can cause death, but most PCP-related deaths are caused by the destructive behavior that the drug produces.
- PCP users have died in fires because they became disoriented and had no sensitivity to the pain of burning.
LSD

- LSD is an extremely strong hallucinogen
- Even a tiny amount can cause hallucinations and severe distorted perceptions of sound and color
- Higher doses increase the risk of convulsions, coma, heart and lung failure, and death
- Because LSD affects the brain’s emotions ranging from extreme euphoria to panic to deep depression
Ketamine

- Ketamine is an anesthetic used for medical purposes, mostly in treating animals.
- Misused as a club drug, ketamine is often sold as a white powder to be snorted, like cocaine, or injected.
- Ketamine causes hallucinations and dreamlike states.
- Its use may result in death by respiratory failure.
- The misuse of ketamine and the use of all other hallucinogens is illegal.
Ecstasy and Other Dangerous Drugs

- Designer drugs are synthetic substances meant to imitate the effects of hallucinogens and other dangerous drugs.
- The designer drugs vary greatly in potency and strength.
- One of the most recognized designed drugs is Ecstasy, or MDMA.
- A combination stimulant and hallucinogen, Ecstasy may give a short-term feeling of euphoria but often causes confusion, depression, paranoia, psychosis and even long term damage to brain cells.
Consequences of Drug Use

- Illegal drug use is associated with a variety of negative consequences, including health problems, addiction, and difficulties in school.
- Drug use often leads to poor judgment, which may put teens at risk for unintentional injuries, car accidents, violence, STDs unintended pregnancies and suicide.