

# STIMULANTS

also known as “uppers”

Stimulants: cocaine, crack, ice, amphetamine, methamphetamine (called Amphetamine-type stimulants or ATS) \*ATS are the 3rd most widely used illicit drug category in the world, following cannabis and opioids

Prescription stimulants: \*Adderall, \*Vyvanse, \*Ritalin, Concerta (\*three most frequently prescribed stimulants as of 2013)

Over-the-counter stimulants: Nicotine, Caffeine

Methods of use: swallowing, smoking, snorting, injecting



Pacific Southwest  
**ROTA-R**

# PREVALENCE OF STIMULANT USE IN RURAL AREAS

- Stimulants are misused all age ranges, but highest misuse is in ages 18-44
- Adolescents and young adults use prescription stimulants at a higher rate
- Stimulant use can be especially hard to combat in rural communities due to limited resources for prevention, treatment, and recovery
- Rural adults have a higher rate of methamphetamine use compared to suburban adults
- Other contributing factors to stimulant use in rural areas include poverty, unemployment, lack of mental health services, and isolation

**“Though often perceived to be a problem in the inner city, substance misuse has long been prevalent in rural areas. Rural adults have a higher rate of use of tobacco and methamphetamines.”**

[www.ruralhealthinfo.org/topics/substance-use](http://www.ruralhealthinfo.org/topics/substance-use)

# EFFECTS OF STIMULANT USE

Short term effects:

- Increases: heart rate, blood pressure, pupil size, respirations, energy
- Decreases: appetite, sleep, reaction time

Long term use can result in:

- Addiction to stimulants
- Organ system damage (i.e., hypertension, stroke, seizure, liver damage/hepatitis, heart failure, brain abnormalities), including death
- Negative psychological effects (depression, mania, suicidal ideation, hallucinations, delusions)
- Other chronic problems: increase in HIV/hepatitis rates due to IV use, cognitive impairment, motor impairment, weight loss, tooth wear, sleep issues, skin issues
- Behavioral problems: disinhibition, increase in risky or violent behaviors

Overdose: Can a person overdose on stimulants – YES. In 2021, approximately 32,537 people died from overdose involving psychostimulants other than cocaine, primarily methamphetamines **Overdose can lead to a heart attack or seizure**

**Call 911 immediately if  
overdose is suspected**

# PREGNANCY AND STIMULANT USE

Stimulant use during pregnancy may cause maternal seizures, high BP, spontaneous miscarriage, preterm labor, and others

# USING STIMULANTS WITH ALCOHOL OR OTHER DRUGS

A synergistic effect (the result of using both is greater than either alone) occurs when using a stimulant and opioids together.

When used with alcohol, it is especially dangerous because the stimulant effect counterbalances the depressant effect, increasing overdose risk. Most potent effect seems to be in the first 90 minutes of co-ingestion.

**According to the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), about 2 million people aged 12 years or older use methamphetamines in any given year, while about 500 people each day try methamphetamines for the first time.**

# TREATMENT OPTIONS AND SUPPORT GROUPS FOR STIMULANT USE

- Twelve-step support groups such as Narcotics Anonymous, Crystal Meth Anonymous
- Self-Management and Recovery Training (SMART)
- Individual or group therapy
- Cognitive behavioral therapy, which helps patients recognize, avoid, and cope with the situations likely to trigger drug use
- Motivational Incentives/  
Contingency Management use vouchers or small cash rewards to encourage patients to remain drug-free
- Behavioral - Exercise, mindfulness, meditation, nutrition
- Medication - There are no FDA-approved medications to treat stimulant addiction

If someone you know is struggling with stimulant use disorder, please consult the SAMHSA treatment locator here:



1-800-662-HELP (4357)

In a crisis?  
Call or text 988

For more information and to view references:



Pacific Southwest  
**ROTA-R**

1(833) 869-4353

[psrota-r.org](http://psrota-r.org)

## MAJOR COLLABORATORS



Pacific Southwest  
**ROTA-R**

