



CRACK

Crack is a highly addictive and powerful “freebase” form of cocaine that is derived from a powdered source using a simple conversion process. It is produced through a filtering process employing baking soda and ether. It is derived from the leaves of the Erythroxylon coca bush, grown in mountainous regions of South America. The final product is a small, hard chip (rock) of smokeable cocaine. It appeared in 1985 and is named for the sound it produces when smoked. Crack is almost pure cocaine. Its use has increased greatly in popularity throughout America. Crack has been described as looking like slivers of soap, but having the general texture of porcelain. It is made by processing the hydrochloride to a base state. It is sold in a form that lends itself to smoking, frequently in a pipe and it is sold in quantities that are relatively inexpensive (\$10 to \$20 per chip). If a person already smokes tobacco cigarettes, using crack is simple to do.

Street Names for Crack

24-7	Electric Kool-Aid	Ice Cube
Badrock	Fat-Bags	Jelly Beans
Beat	French Fries	Paste
Candy	Glo	Prime Time
Cloud	Gravel	Raw
Crumbs	Grit	Scrabble
Crunch & Munch	Hail	Sleet
Devil Drug	Hard Ball	Snow Cake
Rice	Hard Rock	Troop

Crack is a dealer’s dream and a parent’s nightmare. It is the most potent form of one of the most addictive drugs on the street. It is a killer that can leave a person seriously hooked after just one use. Crack gained frightening popularity after its introduction because of its portability, relative small cost (as low as \$3 per chip) and its super quick high. Since crack is more concentrated than powdered cocaine, it is more likely to result in immediate addiction.

Quick Facts

- Crack is a potent form of cocaine, a strong central nervous system stimulant.
- It is absorbed immediately and enters the brain within a few seconds.
- Crack is highly addictive.
- Heavy use of the drug can cause severe physical harm.
- Use of crack during pregnancy can harm the fetus.
- Crack is a serious social problem in the United States

Crack is Illegal

Federal penalties for possession of crack are:

- Up to one year of imprisonment and/or a fine of up to \$5,000 for the first offense.
- Up to two years imprisonment and/or a fine of up to \$10,000 for the second offense.
- Manufacture, distribution or possession with intent to distribute is punishable by imprisonment of 10 years to life and/or a fine up to \$4 million.

Since 1985 the process of producing smokeable cocaine has been simplified, which has reduced its cost and facilitated wider distribution. When smoked, crack creates an intense euphoric effect lasting for 5 to 10 minutes. Crack works more quickly than other forms of cocaine, taking about 7 seconds to reach the brain instead of the 3 minutes cocaine takes if snorted. Crack acts as a stimulant and as a local anesthetic, inducing a hyper-aroused state in which the user experiences a decrease in appetite, rapid breathing and tingling in the fingers.

The user experiences alertness and a sense of well-being, with a lowering of anxiety and social inhibitions, and heightened energy, self-esteem, sexuality and emotions. The effects of crack are said to be 10 times greater than snorted cocaine.

The euphoric state is short-lived and is usually followed by a crash. In the brain, crack directly affects the pleasure centers, which are controlled by the neurotransmitter dopamine, producing a powerful craving and compulsion to obtain more of the drug.

Short-Term Effects

- Bizarre and violent behavior
- Extreme anxiety and restlessness
- Twitches, tremors, spasms and loss of coordination
- Hallucinations and delusions
- Chest pain and nausea
- Impaired judgment
- Loss of inhibitions
- Feelings of grandiosity
- Impulsiveness
- Compulsively repeated acts
- Hypersexuality and atypical sexual behavior

Long-Term Effects

- Loss of appetite and weight
- Dehydration
- Constipation
- Rapid tooth decay
- Difficulty in urinating
- Chronic sore throat
- Heavy congestion
- Severe coughing
- Black sputum
- Lung damage
- Hypertension
- Seizures
- Respiratory arrest
- Cardiac failure

The social effects of crack use include family problems, crime and law-enforcement problems, work-related issues, financial problems, violence and community breakdown.

Who Uses Crack

Crack use spread slowly at first. But, more recently, it has become popular in virtually every American city, also reaching into suburbs and rural areas.

Crack's quick action and relatively low cost have made it popular among young urban users. Individuals of all ages use crack. Approximately 23 million Americans 12 years of age and older have tried crack at least once. It is estimated that 6,222,000 have used crack at least once in the last year. Crack use is a particular problem with high school students. Nearly 4% of high school seniors in the United States used the drug at least once in their lifetime and more than 1% used the drug this past month.

Why People Use Crack

There are many reasons. Some use it for the feelings it induces in low to moderate amounts. They may use it to relieve emotional pressure, to be sociable or just out of curiosity. People desire the feelings of euphoria, self-confidence, and increased energy.

Some people use crack because they feel pressured by their peers. Others use it because of its reputation as a sexually enhancing drug. Still others use crack because they can't stop. They are drug dependent.

If You Need Help

If you or someone you know is using crack, it's time to stop! And, if outside help is needed, there are many rehabilitation resources. Perhaps the best place to start is your family doctor, your local mental health center or your phone book. Consult such listings as "Drug Abuse", "Counselors" and "Crisis Intervention".