



HOLD THE CHEESE, PLEASE

Heroin + Cold Medicine = Trouble

"Cheese heroin" is a street term for heroin mixed with over-the-counter pain or cold medicine. It's cheap, easy to find, and just as dangerous as pure heroin.

Both substances are depressants. Together, they can slow or stop breathing. Even small doses can lead to fatal overdose, especially in teens.

THE PARTY'S OVER

So Is Your Future

Heroin use and possession are illegal. Convictions can lead to jail time, a felony record, and lost educational or job opportunities.

But recovery is possible. Treatment programs, counseling, and medications like buprenorphine, methadone, or naltrexone can help people stop using safely and rebuild their lives.

WALKING AWAY

Saying "No" to Heroin

If someone offers you heroin, stand your ground:

- "No way — I'm not risking my life for that."
- "I've seen what that does to people. I'm not going there."
- "Not interested in something that can kill me the first time."

WORK IT OUT!

Do you know the facts about heroin? Take this quiz and find out!

1. Most heroin found in the U.S. today is mixed or cut with fentanyl.
A. True B. False
2. Heroin made from the opium poppy plant is a depressant that slows breathing and heart rate.
A. True B. False
3. Snorting or smoking heroin is a safe alternative to injecting it.
A. True B. False
4. Heroin use can lead to serious infections like HIV and hepatitis C if needles are shared.
A. True B. False
5. There are proven treatments that can help people recover from heroin addiction.
A. True B. False

Answers: 1. A 2. A 3. B 4. A 5. A

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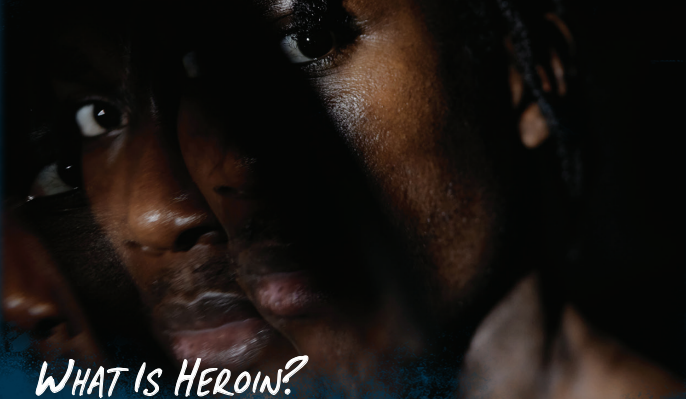
STAY SAFE SERIES

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HEROIN



A KILLER HIGH



WHAT IS HEROIN?

Heroin is made from morphine, a substance taken from the opium poppy plant. Today, most heroin in the U.S. is trafficked from Mexico and South America and is often mixed or “cut” with fentanyl or other synthetic opioids to boost potency.

Because of this, users rarely know what they’re taking. Even a small amount can be fatal.

BLACK TAR HEROIN

Black tar heroin — often called tar, chiva, or la negra — is a dark, sticky form commonly smuggled into the U.S. from Mexico. It’s less refined but extremely potent.

Heroin is thick and impure, so people who inject it face high risks of:

- Vein scarring (sclerosis)
- Bacterial infections
- Heart valve infections
- HIV and hepatitis C

No matter the form, powder or tar, heroin is dangerous and often laced with fentanyl.

THE DANGERS OF “CHASING THE DRAGON”

Snorting or smoking heroin (“chasing the dragon”) isn’t safe, it’s just a different route to the same addiction.

Heroin in any form can cause:

- Overdose and slowed breathing
- Severe dependence
- Collapsed veins and infections
- Exposure to HIV or hepatitis through shared equipment

There’s no safe way to use heroin. Every method carries the risk of death.

STREET NAMES FOR HEROIN

Heroin is also known as smack, skag, horse, junk, brown, or H. No matter what it’s called, it’s deadly.



SHORT-TERM EFFECTS OF HEROIN

Heroin quickly crosses into the brain, producing a rush of euphoria followed by drowsiness. Short-term effects include:

- Nausea and vomiting
- Severe itching
- Slowed heart rate and breathing
- Overdose and death

When the high fades, users experience withdrawal: restlessness, sweating, muscle pain, and strong cravings that drive repeated use.

LONG-TERM EFFECTS OF HEROIN

Heroin addiction develops fast. Long-term use damages nearly every system in the body, leading to:

- Collapsed veins
- Liver, kidney, and heart infections
- Chronic insomnia and depression
- Hormone imbalance and immune suppression
- Fatal overdose

With fentanyl contamination now widespread, overdose risk is higher than ever, even for experienced users.

A DAY IN THE LIFE OF A HEROIN USER

What is it really like?

A few hours after your last dose, your body aches, your stomach turns, and you can’t stop shaking. You inject again — for a few minutes, warmth floods your body and everything feels distant. Then the high fades. You’re sick again, searching for another hit. Each use brings you closer to overdose or infection. That’s the cycle of heroin addiction: short relief, lasting damage.

HOOKED FOR LIFE

Jackie’s Story

Jackie was one of those girls who seemed to have it all together: a straight-A student, captain of her soccer team, and close with her family. After her seventeenth birthday, a friend convinced her to try heroin “just once.” She told herself she could handle it.

At first, Jackie only used occasionally, but the feeling of calm and escape became something she craved. Within months, she was using every day. Her grades slipped, her friends drifted away, and she lost her job at the local bookstore. Her parents barely recognized the tired, distant version of the daughter they loved.

One night, Jackie overdosed. Her mother found her unconscious and called 911. Paramedics revived her with naloxone (Narcan). That night became the turning point. Jackie entered a recovery program where she learned to rebuild her life through counseling, medication-assisted treatment, and support groups.

Recovery wasn’t easy. There were relapses, tears, and long nights of doubt. But slowly, she began to heal. Jackie finished high school, started college, and now volunteers at a local outreach center helping teens understand the risks of drug use.

Jackie says she still takes her recovery one day at a time, but she’s living proof that it’s possible to come back, and that asking for help can save your life.

