Ecstasy also known as MDMA, X, XTC, ADAM, beans, rolls. The chemical name for ecstasy is 3,4 methylenedioxymethamphetamine, or MDMA. Ecstasy is an illegal drug that has stimulant or “upper” and hallucinogenic effects. It is a man-made drug which comes in tablets, pills, and capsules, which are manufactured in illegal labs. Many times the tablets are stamped with logos or icons.

**So how does it work?**

Ecstasy may contain amphetamines and hallucinogens. Amphetamines are “uppers”, they speed up the brain and central nervous system. Hallucinogens are drugs that can cause people to hear or see things that are not actually there. Ecstasy mainly effects serotonin, a chemical in the brain which effects mood, aggression, sleep, and sexual activity.

Use of Ecstasy may result in pleasurable effects initially. These effects include an enhanced sense of self-confidence, energy, peacefulness, acceptance and empathy. Users report they experience feelings of closeness with others and a desire to touch others.

Withdrawal from Ecstasy may result in depression, anxiety, panic attacks, and sleeplessness.

**What happens when Ecstasy is mixed with....**

**Alcohol?**

Mixing ecstasy and alcohol increases the risk of dangerous or deadly reactions.

**Marijuana?**

Mixing ecstasy and marijuana increases the risk of dangerous or deadly reactions.

**Is there a chance this substance could contain contaminants if it is obtained “on the street”? If so, what are the effects of these contaminants?**

Since ecstasy is an illegal drug, it is impossible to know what chemicals or drugs were used to make it. What chemicals, how strong, or how dangerous the drug is will vary. It is made in illegal labs, and makers may add anything they wish to the drug.

Caffeine, cocaine, ephedrine (a stimulant), dextromethorphan (a cough suppressant that has PCP-like effects at high doses), and ketamine (an anesthetic used mostly by veterinarians that also has PCP-like effects) are often added to the drug. These “extra ingredients” further increase the risk of harmful reactions and death.

**Short term effects of taking Ecstasy**

**Judgment**

- Use could result in paranoia, confusion, and inability to sleep which may impair judgment.
- Use of this drug may cause drug dependence and/or addiction.

**Memory**

- Ecstasy effects short term memory, which means it, may be difficult to recall what someone has just told you, or problems memorizing facts.

**Health**

- Use of Ecstasy may result in drug dependence and/or addiction.
- Ecstasy causes muscle tension, which may cause involuntary teeth grinding, increased heart rate, increased blood pressure, chills and/or sweating, nausea, dizziness, and faintness.
- Ecstasy masks the body’s normal sense of thirst, which may cause dehydration and the body to overheat. This can lead to liver, kidney, or heart failure and even death.
- Heat stroke, or hyperthermia, is the main cause of death from Ecstasy.

**Long term effects of taking Ecstasy**

**Judgment**

- Use could result in paranoia, confusion, and inability to sleep which may impair judgment.
- Use of this drug may cause drug dependence and/or addiction

**Memory**

- Ecstasy damages nerve endings in the brain that are responsible for thought and memory. This damage may lead to permanent memory loss.

**Health**

- Long term use of Ecstasy may cause permanent brain damage which has been associated with anxiety, depression, or sleep disorders. These disorders may persist for years, even after stopping use of Ecstasy.
- “Bumping”, or taking another pill as the effects wear off is very dangerous. Ecstasy interrupts its own breakdown in the body, so toxic levels of the drug occur with repeated doses in a short amount of time. This overload of drug in the body may cause an overdose, which results in increased body temperature and even death.
- Use of ecstasy may result in coma or death.

For more information contact the Student Health Center at 348.3878

References