

Heroin Addiction & Heroin Treatment

Processed from morphine, heroin is the most abused and rapidly acting opiate available. Morphine is a naturally occurring substance extracted from the seed pod of certain varieties of poppy plants. Typically found in a white or brownish powder form, heroin also is found as a black sticky substance commonly referred to as "black tar heroin." Purer heroin is becoming more common, but most street heroin is still "cut" with other drugs or substances including sugar, starch, powdered milk, quinine, strychnine, fentanyl and other poisons. Heroin users are at high risk for overdose due to the fact that they do not know the true potency or strength of the dose. Heroin is also extremely dangerous and puts users at risk for HIV and other diseases due to the fact that users often share needles. Heroin can be injected, smoked or sniffed/snorted.

Street terms for Heroin are:

Smack, thunder, big H, Horse, China white, Dope, and Junk

Effects of Heroin

Heroin can affect intravenous users within 7 to 8 seconds after injection, though intramuscular injection takes an average of 5 to 8 minutes to take effect, and snorting or smoking the drug usually produces peak effects within an average of 10 to 15 minutes. Heroin provides users a feeling of euphoria, as it is a synthetic opiate that binds to receptors in the central nervous system that work with the body's own physiological opioids like endorphins and enkephalins.

Lasting/Long-Term Effects

Frequent users of heroin quickly become addicted and build up a tolerance to the drug, making it necessary to ingest larger quantities in order to achieve the same initial effects. Chronic users may develop collapsed veins, abscesses, liver disease, pulmonary complications and more. Heroin can also cause death.