

What to expect


heroin

The high

- A high that lasts 20 minutes – 2 hours
- Feeling intense pleasure and reduced pain
- Warm skin, dry mouth, heavy feeling arms and legs
- Nausea, vomiting and severe itching
- Slow, shallow breathing

Coming down

- Feeling restless, sweaty, stomach cramps and diarrhea
- Muscle spasms and bone pain
- High blood pressure
- Strong cravings for more heroin

 Note: combining substances can be dangerous. Proceed with caution.

crack/coke

The high

- A high that lasts 15–45 minutes
- Feeling an intense, euphoric rush
- Warm skin, dry mouth
- Feeling thirsty, not hungry
- Rapid heartbeat and breathing
- Auditory hallucinations, delusions

Coming down

- Feeling restless, sweaty and twitchy
- Sensitivity to noise and light
- Feelings of paranoia
- Strong cravings for more crack

Signs of overdose

heroin overdose

Feels like:

- You can't stay awake
- You don't have any energy or strength
- You can't walk, can't talk

Looks like:

- Slow pulse or no pulse
- Slow breathing or no breathing
- Skin looks pale and blue, feels cold
- Can't wake up or talk
- Pupils are pinned or eyes are rolled back
- Vomiting
- Body is limp

crack/coke overdose

Feels like:

- Your heart is pumping fast
- You're short of breath
- Your body is hot, sweaty and shaky
- You have chest pain
- You can't talk, can't walk

Looks like:

- Fast pulse or no pulse
- Fast or no breathing
- Hot and sweaty skin
- Confusion, hallucinations, unconscious
- Can't talk, can't walk
- Vomiting
- Seizures

What to do if someone ODs

- 1 Call out for help – **do not leave the victim**
- 2 If they've OD'd on heroin, try to get them awake and moving
If they've OD'd on crack/coke, try to get them to slow down and relax
- 3 Call 9-1-1 for an ambulance, send someone to seek help and report back
- 4 Tell paramedics as much as you can about what happened

Ready to detox?

Help is just a phone call away.

Call Access Central at 1-866-658-1221, seven days a week from 9am to 7:45pm for detox, residential addiction services and addiction housing.

 **1.866.658.1221**

For more copies, go online at vch.eduhealth.ca or email pchem@vch.ca and quote Catalogue No. **DB.500.534**
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Your peers created this harm reduction pamphlet for you. **Be safe.**



Safer Injecting

heroin crack/coke

What you need to inject safer:



Sterile needle



Sterile water



Alcohol swabs



Cotton filter or tampon (unscented)



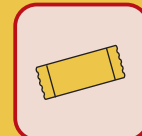
Cooker or spoon



Rubber tie



Lighter or candle



Ascorbic acid/vitamin C (crack only)

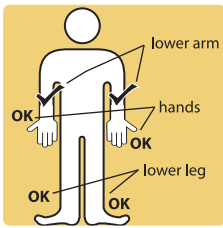


Clean hands

How to inject safer

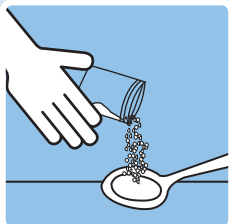


Clean your hands with soap and water or alcohol swabs

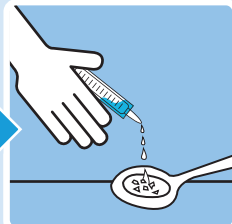


Choose your injection site (lower arm is safest. If you have to inject elsewhere, lower leg then hand are OK)

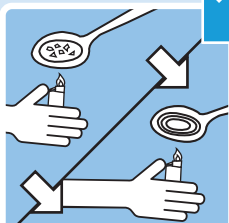
Prepare your drugs – heroin



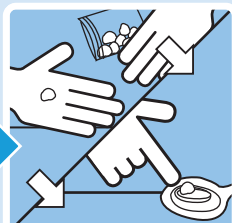
Pour drugs in cooker/spoon



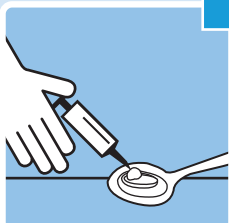
Pour sterile water in cooker/spoon



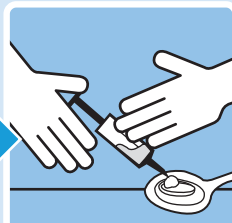
Heat until drug becomes liquid



Take cotton filter/piece of unscented tampon and place in drugs



Place needle in filter

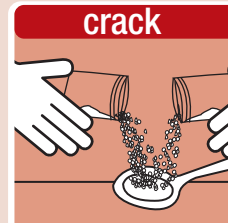


Draw liquid into needle

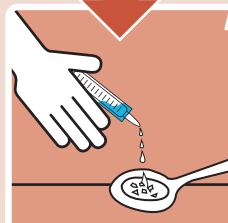
Prepare your drugs – crack/coke



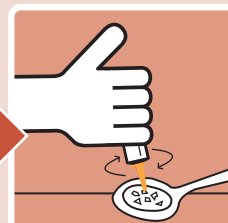
Pour coke into cooker/spoon



Pour in just enough ascorbic acid to dissolve crack



Pour sterile water into cooker/spoon



Using clean, capped needle, grind crack and ascorbic acid to mix



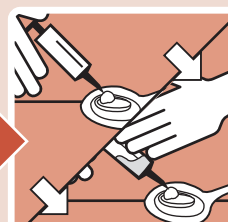
Using clean, capped needle, grind coke to mix – NO NEED TO HEAT



If crack mixture is cloudy or has sediment, heat as needed – DO NOT BOIL



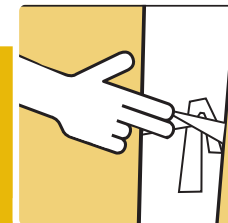
Place cotton filter / piece of unscented tampon in drugs



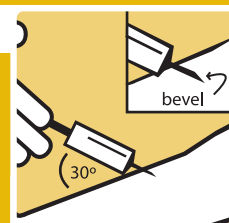
Place needle in filter and draw liquid into needle



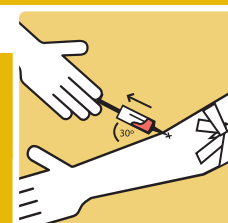
Clean your injection site with an alcohol swab



Tie off with a rubber tie using a quick release



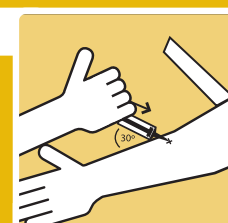
Insert your needle with the bevel up, at a 30 degree angle towards your head



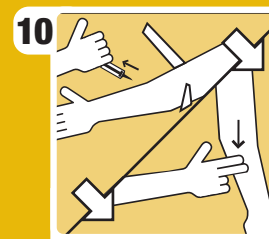
Flag your needle: push needle in a little and pull back on plunger until you see blood in the needle



Loosen your tie



Inject your drug slowly



10 Pull out and with clean hands, apply pressure to injection site



11 Safely dispose of all equipment – make it your gig to return your rig

Safer injection tips

- Taste your drugs before you use
- Always use with a buddy
- Use a new needle for each injection
- Please don't break off the tip of your needle or re-cap it – it's not safe
- Remember: two holes in your arm are better than one in the ground. If you haven't used in a while, reduce your dose.
- **Protect yourself and your community – always dispose of your equipment safely**

injecting

- The most dangerous place to inject is your neck
- To make your veins more visible: jog on the spot or do push-ups before tying off
- If you can't see the bevel, look for the numbers on the side of your needle, they often line up with the bevel

filters

- Unscented tampons are safe to use as filters – do not use cigarette filters
- Use a filter once only – using it more than once can lead to "cotton fever"

ties

- Ties should be on for two minutes maximum
- If your hand falls asleep or arm turns red while tied off, the tie is too tight, or has been on too long

abscesses and wounds

- Keep injection sites clean and watch for abscesses – they can happen anywhere on the body, not just where you inject
- If you have an abscess, do not pop it
- Seek medical care for treatment of abscesses or wounds – they can lead to dangerous infections