



DRUG FACT SHEET

Heroin

Heroin overdose is a particular risk because the amount and purity of the drug cannot be accurately known.

Class of drug:	Narcotic/Opiate
Main active ingredient:	Morphine, which is processed and extracted from the seed pod of certain poppy plants
What it looks like:	Powder (white to dark brown), tar-like substance
Street names:	Smack, Horse, Brown Sugar, Junk, Mud, Big H, Black Tar, White Boy
How it is used:	Injected, inhaled or smoked
Paraphernalia used:	Needles/syringes; burned or dirty spoons/bottle cap tops; small plastic baggies with white powdery residue; small glass or metal pipes; lighters; belts/shoelaces missing (used to tie off injection sites); aluminum foil or gum wrappers with burn marks
Duration of high:	Euphoria sets in within seven seconds (intravenous injection), two to five minutes (intramuscular injection) or 10 to 15 minutes (sniffed or smoked). The high lasts from 10 to 30 minutes. Euphoria is followed by lethargy, sleepiness and apathy.

Effects:

Immediate—A rush, accompanied by a warm flushing of the skin, dry mouth and heavy feeling in the extremities, slowed breathing, slowed cardiac function, suppression of pain, clouded mental functioning, constricted (small pupils, slowed/slurred speech, nodding out (alternating between wakeful and drowsy state), droopy eyes, constipation, vomiting, runny nose, needle track marks visible on arms

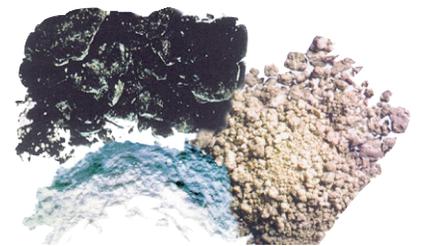
Long-term—contaminated injection equipment may transmit diseases such as HIV and hepatitis, collapsed veins, infection of heart lining and valves, tuberculosis

Withdrawal symptoms:

Restlessness, yawning, muscle and bone pain, cold flashes with goose bumps, diarrhea, vomiting and insomnia. Major withdrawal symptoms peak between 24 to 48 hours after the last dose and subside after a week. Heroin withdrawal is never fatal in otherwise healthy adults.

Overdose symptoms:

Blue lips, not breathing right, won't wake up, unresponsive to pain



Clockwise from top: Black tar heroin, brown powdered heroin and white powdered heroin

Illinois information

In Chicago and its suburbs, more people visit emergency rooms for heroin overdoses than any other major metropolitan area in the United States. Deaths from heroin overdoses increased in Lake County by 130 percent from 2000 to 2009. McHenry County saw an increase of 150 percent in three years. Heroin deaths in Will County doubled in two years.

(Roosevelt University Illinois Consortium on Drug Policy, 2011)

Sources: American Medical Association, National Institute on Drug Abuse, Drug Abuse Warning Network, National Drug Intelligence Center, U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration