



DRUG FACT SHEET

Inhalants

The primary users of household inhalants are pre-teenagers and young teenagers because the products are readily available, cheap and legal.

Class of drug:	Psychoactive
Main active ingredient:	There are more than 1,400 common household products that can be misused as inhalants. Active ingredients vary, but most common ones are nitrous oxide, amyl nitrite, butyl nitrite, chlorohydrocarbons (aerosol sprays) and hydrocarbon (solvents). Most are volatile chemicals.
What it looks like:	Varies; common household products include glue, paint, lighter fluid, whipping cream cans or whipping cream chargers, and canned air dusters
Street names:	Bolt, Bullet, Laughing Gas, Whippets, Poppers, Snappers, Locker Room, Huffing, Sniffing
How it is used:	Breathed into the lungs through the mouth or nose by sniffing, spraying, bagging, huffing (a soaked rag) or inhaling (from a balloon)
Duration of high:	Inhalants reach the brain almost instantly, producing an immediate high (euphoria). It usually lasts a few minutes; however, sometimes users extend this effect for several hours by breathing in inhalants repeatedly.
Withdrawal symptoms:	Irritability, agitation, increased heart rate, chills, hallucinations
Effects:	Physical —slurred speech, seizures, nosebleeds, nausea, loss of appetite, decreased heart rate, death Mental —feelings of euphoria, impaired judgment, violent behavior, hallucinations Long-term —paranoid psychosis, brain, liver and kidney damage, hepatitis, brain hemorrhage, cancer, bone marrow damage



Whippets (top right) are small canisters of nitrous oxide used to make whipped cream. They have become a popular inhalant for teenagers because they are easy to obtain. They can be purchased at grocery stores and in bulk on the internet.

Experimentation with inhalants should not be taken lightly. Even a single session of repeated inhalant abuse can disrupt heart rhythms and cause death from cardiac arrest or lower oxygen levels enough to cause suffocation.

U.S. information

Inhalants are the fourth most abused substance after alcohol, tobacco, and marijuana. Over 2.6 million kids, aged 12 to 17, have used an inhalant to get high. Inhalant abuse usually begins around age 10.

In 2015, 7 percent of high school students in the United States reported using inhalants at some point during their lifetime.

(Alliance for Consumer Education; U.S. Centers for Disease Control Youth Risk Behavior Survey, 2015)

Sources: NIDA Research Report Series, Drug-Free Resources Net, National Household Survey on Drug Abuse (NHSDA), Drug Policy Information Clearinghouse, National Conference on State Legislatures, American Journal of Drug and Alcohol Abuse, Monitoring the Future Study