

DRUG (Street Names)

Plastic cement, fingernail polish remover, lighter fluid, nitrous oxide, ether, hair spray, insecticides, and cleaning fluid (snappers, poppers, locker room, rush, moon gas, whip-its, medusa).

HOW TAKEN

Inhalants are inhaled into the nose or mouth.

EFFECTS

Short Term: At first, a short-lived high that might include dizziness and lightheadedness.

Further use may cause sneezing, coughing, runny nose, nose bleeds, nausea, abnormal heart rhythm, and pains. May also cause impaired coordination, balance, and judgment.

Long Term: Long term use may result in liver, nerve, and brain damage; heart failure, respiratory arrest, suffocation, coma, and death.



APPEARANCE

Household, industrial, and medical products, such as paint thinners, degreasers, gasoline, glues, correction fluids, spray paints, hair sprays, fabric protector sprays, butane lighters, propane tanks, whipped cream dispensers, and room odorizers.

DANGERS

- * Brain damage from prolonged use.
- * Death results when high concentrations of the inhalant replace oxygen in the lungs, suppressing the central nervous system to the extent that breathing stops.
- * Tolerance - Over time, users must inhale increased amounts of the substance to obtain the same effects.
- * Withdrawal - Symptoms of withdrawal include anxiety, agitation, antisocial behavior, depression, confusion and delusions.

MAGNITUDE OF THE PROBLEM

The majority of inhalants are common household and workplace products which are readily available, inexpensive, and therefore easy to abuse--even for preteens and younger children. A recent national survey revealed that about 6 percent of U.S. children have tried inhalants by the time they are in the 4th grade. In 1999, 19.7 percent of 8th graders, 17.0 percent of 10th-graders, and 15.4 percent of 12th-graders said they had abused inhalants at least once in their lives, which leads researchers to think that perhaps many of the 8th-grade abusers drop out of school and are no longer included in the survey population.

Q & A CORNER

Q. What are "Club Drugs"

A. Drugs such as MDMA (Ecstasy), Rohypnol, GHB, and Ketamine that are used by teens and young adults who are part of a nightclub, bar, rave, or trance scene. Raves and trance events are generally night long dances, often held in warehouses. Many who attend raves and trances do not use drugs, but those who do may be attracted to the generally low cost, seemingly increased stamina, and intoxicating highs that are said to deepen the rave or trance experience.

Writing a policy isn't enough; supervisors need to be trained

After developing a written drug-free workplace policy, an organization should train those individuals closest to the workforce--supervisors. Supervisor training is an integral part of every drug-free workplace program.

At a minimum, supervisor training should include a review of:

- The company's drug-free workplace policy.
- Supervisors' specific responsibilities in implementing the policy.
- Ways to recognize and deal with employees who have job performance problems that may be related to alcohol and other drugs.
- What the employee's rights are, not only under company policy, but also under state and federal laws.
- Available treatment programs in the area and how to properly refer employees to treatment.

In addition, if supervisors are responsible for making referrals for testing based on reasonable suspicion, they must also be thoroughly trained on how to make that determination.

Source: U.S. Department of Labor