

AMPHETAMINE SULPHATE

History	<p>Synthesised in 1887, 1927 used in the treatment of narcolepsy. 1940s soldiers liberally supplied with amphetamine to boost morale, fight battle fatigue and reduce the need for food. Seventy-two million tablets were supplied to British forces. Prescribed in large quantities for obesity and depression – in 1961 2.5% of all NHS prescriptions were for these drugs.</p> <p>Restricted in 1964 but GPs are still prescribing. It was part of the Mod culture in the 1960s, used to stay awake all night. Part of the dance scene in the 1980s and 1990s to give energy and stamina. Arouses the user in the same way as adrenaline.</p>
Street name	Speed, whizz, sulph, sulphate.
Type	Stimulant.
Drug Effect	<p>Amphetamines are stimulant drugs that work on the central nervous system. They start working within fifteen minutes (faster if injected or smoked.) They cause an increase in heart rate and blood pressure. They make the user feel more alert, confident and give a sense of increased energy. They reduce the desire for sleep and suppress the appetite. They can cause tension in the muscles, and cause tightness of the jaw, which leads some people to grind their teeth and chew constantly. Users tend to talk a lot, and pupils may become dilated.</p> <p>Other less popular effects are anxiety, paranoia, and irritability.</p> <p>Amphetamines elevate levels of dopamine and adrenalin. This causes intense euphoria and feelings of wellbeing, but also puts significant strain on the cardiovascular system.</p> <p>Methamphetamine is also associated with elevating sexual arousal and can lead to long bouts of unsafe sexual behaviour.</p> <p>Depending on the drug and route, the duration of effect varies massively. This could range from an hour or two for injected amphetamines, to over twelve hours for methamphetamine. Strong stimulant (upper). Effects last 3 - 4 hrs. Increases heart rate and blood pressure. Users feel alert, more confident and energetic, talk a lot.</p>
Dependency	YES – mainly psychological.
Description	Yellow / pink crystalline powder. Costs around £5 a gram. Street speed usually of very poor quality.

<p>Street use</p>	<p>Amphetamines in powder form can be swallowed, snorted, dabbed onto the gums, or injected. Methamphetamine is usually smoked, though it can be injected.</p> <p>Base speed is non-soluble making it useless for snorting and dangerous to inject. It is usually swallowed or can be smoked.</p> <p>Speed is usually sold by weight at a cost of around £5 per gram. Base is more expensive, typically £20-30 a gram. Prices for methamphetamine in the UK are the source of much speculation but allegedly range from £35-75 a gram.</p>
<p>Withdrawal</p>	<p>Tolerance develops rapidly and users can increase the dose by fifty-fold. Withdrawal comes in two phases; the immediate 'crash' lasts 2 – 3 weeks and is characterised by hunger, extreme fatigue and long periods of disturbed sleep.</p>
<p>Long term use</p>	<p>Amphetamine use does not provide the body with any extra energy nor does it remove the need for sleep. It simply allows the body to access existing reserves of energy faster and prevents, rather than removes, the need for sleep.</p> <p>There is an inevitable comedown after the amphetamines have worn off - tiredness, depression, loss of self-esteem, hunger, and achiness. There may be a temptation to alleviate some of these symptoms by using some painkilling or tranquillising drug, or alternatively using more speed. Neither option is ultimately beneficial and it would be better to allow the body to recover naturally through eating and sleeping to recuperate lost energy.</p> <p>Use of amphetamines can cause weight loss which, if extensive, could be dangerous and damaging. Historically dexamphetamine was prescribed as an aid to slimming though this practice is now seriously frowned upon.</p> <p>Amphetamines are usually 'cut' with other substances to increase the profit when sold; these adulterants can cause damage and illness, especially when they are toxic substances. Regular snorting of amphetamines can cause damage to the nasal passages; rubbing speed onto the gums can cause gum and tooth damage. Swallowing amphetamines can cause stomach irritation and nausea. Injecting speed carries all the risks attached to intravenous drug use.</p> <p>Smoking methamphetamine is associated with damage to teeth and gums, leading to a dental syndrome dubbed 'meth mouth.'</p> <p>Psychologically, regular and frequent speed use can cause a condition called Amphetamine Psychosis, typified by intense paranoia and anxiety. While the condition usually abates after the amphetamine use is discontinued, medical</p>

	<p>assistance may be helpful.</p> <p>Deaths do occur and risks of death are exacerbated amongst people who have heart conditions.</p> <p>Amphetamines are not physically addictive but there is a significant risk of psychological dependency especially amongst frequent regular users. The compulsion to use methamphetamine appears to be especially strong.</p>
Overdose	<p>Death from overdose is possible with large doses but is extremely rare. Risk increases if mixed with opiates, barbiturates and alcohol.</p>
Legal Status	<p>Class B, Schedule 2. Class A if prepared for injection.</p>