

# MENTAL HEALTH EFFECTS

## METHAMPHETAMINE

METH | ICE | CRYSTAL | SHARDS

### Methamphetamine and mental health

There is a strong correlation between the use of methamphetamine (meth) and mental health issues. Meth use can cause anxiety, depression, paranoia and psychosis in those people who have a vulnerability to mental health problems.

### Depression

People who already experience depression may find that using meth makes their depression worse in the long term, as it depletes serotonin, the feel good chemical in the brain. Depression is most often felt when the person is not using the drug, which makes them want to go back for more.

### Anxiety

When using meth people often feel nervous and agitated. Meth can increase heart rate and leave a person short of breath. Feelings of paranoia can occur triggering panic attacks, causing users to feel suddenly afraid or anxious.

*"I was getting really anxious. I thought my friends were talking about me behind my back. It felt like everyone was against me and that freaked me out. I thought I was losing control of my life."*

### References

National Drug and Alcohol Research Centre 2014. Methamphetamine: What you need to know about speed, ice, crystal, base and meth.

### Psychosis

Meth use can lead to psychotic symptoms especially in individuals who have used meth for a long time and in large amounts. After a person stops using, symptoms can go away within a few hours to days. However, for a small number of people the problems can continue for a longer period of time and may be related to underlying mental health conditions.

### Common symptoms of methamphetamine psychosis:

- Seeing shadows or lights in the corner of their eye.
- Hearing someone calling their name when nobody is around.
- Feeling self conscious as though people are watching them.
- Feeling like ordinary everyday things have special importance or meaning.
- Imagining things are changing shape or moving when they're not.
- Having unusual thoughts (e.g. the user may feel that other people are reading their mind).
- Feeling suspicious (e.g. the user may feel as though people are 'out to get' them).
- Hallucinations (hearing or seeing things that aren't there).

### Other symptoms of methamphetamine psychosis:

- Repetitive compulsive behaviour.
- Tactile hallucinations (e.g. feeling things that aren't there).
- Olfactory hallucinations (e.g. smelling things that aren't there).
- Muddled thoughts, incoherent speech and going off on tangents.



## METH CAN TAKE CONTROL

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