

RECOGNISE AND RESPOND TO AMPHETAMINE INTOXICATION & TOXICITY

SEVERE INTOXICATION

Signs of severe intoxication may include: anxiety, agitation, paranoia, overheating, disorientation, severe persistent headache, uncoordinated movements, or rapid breathing.

Recognising and responding early to these signs may prevent further mental or physical harms. If someone is experiencing these signs/symptoms then medical attention should be sought to prevent possible toxicity. In the interim, aim to cool the person down (sipping water), reduce stimulation (bright lights, loud noise) and seek medical assistance.

TOXICITY

Amphetamine toxicity is a serious medical condition which can result in physical and mental health symptoms that require medical treatment. Untreated, amphetamine toxicity can result in heart failure, seizures, coma, or death. Knowing what to look for and how to respond can help to reduce harms.

As well as symptoms listed for intoxication, signs of toxicity may include: severe fever, chest pain, muscle stiffness, tremors, spasms, fierce jerking movements of the limbs, seizures, severe agitation or panic, difficulty breathing, heart palpitations, psychosis.

If someone is experiencing any of these symptoms call 000 (Triple Zero) for an ambulance and commence first aid, including CPR if required.

RESPONDING TO SOMEONE EXPERIENCING MENTAL HEALTH DIFFICULTIES

- Be aware of personal space, approach from about two metres away
- Use a calm tone of voice
- Introduce yourself and ask how you can help
- Use non-threatening body language, try to mirror or get down to their level
- Do not laugh at or dismiss the person's delusions. Remember, it is 'real to them'
- Ask how you can help them feel safe
- Offer them small amounts of water to sip
- Get them to somewhere cool
- Reduce stimulation; move them away from lights, music, noise, windows, busy streets, crowds
- If you feel unsafe or are unsure of what to do, call an ambulance 000 (Triple Zero)
- Encourage the person to take slow, deep breaths

RECOGNISE
&
RESPOND

DIAL

000

(TRIPLE ZERO)

AMPHETAMINE INTOXICATION & TOXICITY

DIAL 000 (TRIPLE ZERO)

REMEMBER

Amphetamine toxicity is a serious medical issue and is a medical emergency

Responding to someone experiencing mental health difficulties

- Keep yourself and the other person safe
- Respect personal space
- Introduce yourself, use a calm tone of voice
- Use non-threatening body language
- Do not dismiss delusions
- Ask how you can help the person feel safe
- Take them somewhere cool, offer water
- Reduce stimulation



Government of Western Australia
Mental Health Commission

AMPHETAMINE HARMS & EFFECTS AND HARM REDUCTION STRATEGIES

This resource has been developed for people who are using amphetamine-type stimulants, including methamphetamine, dexamphetamine and amphetamine sulphate (speed).

AMPHETAMINE HARMS AND EFFECTS

- Psychosis: delusions and hallucinations
- Anxiety and panic attacks
- Poor impulse control
- Paranoia
- Bizarre/irrational behaviour
- Increased perception of threat to self or others (threat sensitive)
- Seizures
- Jaw clenching and teeth grinding
- Dehydration
- Overheating
- Severe headache
- Severe muscle cramps
- Heart attack
- Stroke
- Very rapid or irregular heart rate

OTHER RELATED HARMS

Using methamphetamine can increase your sexual drive and risk taking. You may take sexual risks that you normally wouldn't. This can increase the risk of sexually transmitted infections (STIs), HIV and hepatitis C.

Sharing injecting equipment also increases the risk of HIV or hepatitis C transmission.

HARM REDUCTION TIPS

- The safest option is to not use amphetamines
- Do not use with other drugs
- Do not use while you are alone
- Look after your mates if they are using
- Never share injecting equipment
- Decrease how often you use and/or use smaller amounts
- Take a break from using

LOOKING AFTER YOURSELF

When using amphetamines, people may experience sleeplessness, disturbed sleep, altered mood and/or depression

Some people may use other drugs to manage withdrawal, sleep and mood, which can increase harms. Discuss the harms and effects with an alcohol and other drug (AOD) worker or your doctor.

IT IS IMPORTANT TO:

- Take a break
- Get some sleep/rest
- Drink plenty of water and eat

CHECKING-IN WITH YOURSELF/ HELPFUL TIPS

How is your mental health? Have you noticed any feelings of paranoia or anxiety? Talk to a mental health or AOD worker or your doctor.

Have you eaten? You may not have been eating well whilst using. Try to eat some fresh, healthy food such as fruit, vegetables and fish.

Have you had any sleep? Making sure you get enough sleep is really important, especially if you have been using over a period of days.

Have you been drinking enough water?

Drink water regularly, sip small amounts. If you have been using ecstasy and dancing, or in a hot environment, drink 500mls of water per hour only.

How is your personal hygiene? Having a shower, changing clothes, brushing your teeth, can help you feel better.

Have you been feeling flat or joyless? If you have been using for months/years at increasing amounts and stop using, you may experience feeling joyless or flat. This is normal and for most people will get better with time.

Alcohol and Drug Support Line
9442 5000 or country callers
1800 198 024 (24/7 counselling and information)

Parent and Family Drug Support Line
9442 5050 or country callers
1800 653 203

IF YOU NEED EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE CALL 000 (TRIPLE ZERO)