



Inhalants have vapours or fumes which can be breathed in and make you feel high, intoxicated or disoriented.



headspace
National Youth Mental Health Foundation

A.K.A.: Solvents, glue, gas, sniff, sniffing, huff, chroming, poppers

Inhalants will slow down your coordination, judgement and response times, but they will not necessarily make you feel depressed. Many everyday products have been used as inhalants, including glue, aerosol sprays, cleaning fluids, liquid paper, paints and petrol.



How are inhalants taken?

Inhalants are breathed in through the nose or mouth. They can be inhaled by sniffing or 'snorting' fumes from containers, spraying aerosols directly into the mouth or nose, spraying or placing the product in a paper or plastic bag and then inhaling, by huffing from an inhalant-soaked rag, or inhaling from balloons filled with nitrous oxide.



What are the effects of inhalants?

The effect of inhalants varies from one person to the next. It depends on how much you inhaled, your weight and health, what you have used before (and how much), your mood when you use inhalants, and whether you have taken other drugs. Most inhalants slow down the body's functions. If large quantities are inhaled they can quickly cause intoxication, which usually lasts only a few minutes.

Some of the effects include feeling dizzy and light-headed, feeling confident, and excitement and laughter.

Effects that aren't so good can include:

- Slurred speech
- Feeling thirsty
- Being unable to coordinate your movements, with slow reflexes
- Dribbling, sneezing or coughing
- Feeling tired after the initial high
- Blurred vision
- Nausea (feeling sick and wanting to vomit)
- Nose bleeds
- Headaches and feeling 'hung over'
- Hallucinations (seeing or hearing things that are not there)
- Risky behavior, including aggression and violence, accidents and injury, and unwanted sex.

Repeated use of inhalants can feel good at first, but can make you feel less inhibited and less in control.

Inhalants can make you lose consciousness, and there is a risk of death from heart failure or suffocation. Death is a very real risk of inhalants, and can happen whether you're a first timer or a regular user.



Inhalants



What are the long-term effects of inhalants?

Inhalants are dangerous chemicals, often more so than cannabis or ecstasy. Repeated use can cause severe damage to the brain, liver and kidneys, cause memory loss, confused thinking, tremors, lead poisoning, sores around the mouth and nose, weight loss, depression and irritability.

Use of inhalants can also lead to conflict with friends and family, and perhaps losing contact with them.



What about withdrawal?

It is possible to become dependant on inhalants. This mean it can be very hard to stop, and stopping suddenly can cause symptoms like anxiety, depression, loss of appetite, irritation, aggression, dizziness, tremors and nausea.

Managing your drug use

If you, your family or your friends think your drug use is becoming a problem, then get some help and talk to people about it. Changing your drug use can be hard work, but it will be worth it.

Some people can reduce or stop drug use on their own, but think about talking to a trusted family member, friend, doctor or counsellor.

For more information, and to find out how to get help, visit the headspace website: www.headspace.org.au