

Health Risks and Available Resources:

Health Risks:

The following are summaries of the major health risks of and common symptoms associated with alcohol and other drug use and abuse. This is not a complete listing but an overview.

Each individual will experience the effects of alcohol and other drugs in a slightly different way given his or her tolerance, body size, family history, gender, and other physical and psychological factors. Abuse of alcohol and other drugs can lead to chemical dependency and can be harmful during pregnancy.

Alcohol Health Risks:

Alcohol in moderate amounts causes dizziness, dulling of the senses, impairment of coordination, reflexes, memory and judgment. Increased amounts of alcohol produce staggering, slurred speech, double vision, mood changes and, possibly, unconsciousness. Larger amounts result in death. Alcohol causes damage to the liver, heart and pancreas. It also may lead to malnutrition, stomach irritation, lowered resistance to disease and irreversible brain or nervous system damage. Symptoms: Glazed eyes, obvious odor, pale and dry skin, broken blood vessels in facial area, slowed motor coordination and enlarged stomach.

Marijuana Health Risks:

Marijuana use leads to a substantial increase in heart rate. It impairs or reduces short-term memory and comprehension, and motivation and cognition are altered. With extended use it can produce paranoia and psychosis. Smoking marijuana damages the lungs and pulmonary system. Marijuana contains more cancer causing agents than tobacco. It also lowers male sex hormones, suppresses ovulation, and causes changes in the menstrual cycle and possibly causes birth defects. Symptoms: Someone who uses marijuana may laugh inappropriately and have bloodshot eyes, dry mouth and throat, and a tell-tale odor of the drug, a poor sense of timing and increased appetite.

Cocaine and Crack Health Risks:

Cocaine and its derivative crack produce dilated pupils and elevated blood pressure, heart rate, respiratory rate and body temperature. They may also cause insomnia, loss of appetite, tactile hallucinations, paranoia, seizure and death. Symptoms: Someone using cocaine may experience muscle twitching, panic reactions, anxiety, numbness in hands and feet, loss of weight, a period of hyperactivity followed by a depression, a running or bleeding nose and sustained depression.

Barbiturates Health Risks:

In small doses, barbiturates produce calmness, relaxed muscles and lowered anxiety. Larger doses cause slurred speech, staggering gait and altered perception. Very large doses taken in combination with other central nervous system depressants (e.g., alcohol) cause respiratory depression, coma and sometimes death. Symptoms: A person who uses barbiturates may have poor muscle control, appear drowsy or drunk, become confused, irritable, inattentive or have slowed reactions.

Amphetamines Health Risks:

Amphetamine use causes increased heart and respiratory rates, elevated blood pressure, and dilated pupils. Larger doses cause rapid or irregular heartbeat, tremors and physical collapse. An amphetamine injection creates a sudden increase in blood pressure that can result in stroke, high fever and heart failure. Symptoms: An individual using amphetamines might begin to lose weight, have periods of excessive sweating, and appear restless, anxious, moody and unable to focus. Extended use may produce psychosis, including hallucinations, delusions and paranoia.

Hallucinogens (including PCP, LSD, Mescaline, Peyote, Psilocybin) Health Risks:

PCP, or angel dust, interrupts the part of the brain that controls the intellect and impulsive behavior. PCP blocks pain receptors. Violent episodes, including self-inflicted injuries, are not uncommon. Chronic users report memory loss and speech difficulty. Very large doses produce convulsions, coma, heart and lung failure, or ruptured blood vessels in the brain. LSD, mescaline, peyote, etc. cause dilated pupils, elevated body temperature, increased heart rate and blood pressure, and tremors. Symptoms: Someone using PCP might appear moody, aggressive or violent. Such an individual may become paranoid and experience hallucinations and have time and body movements slowed. LSD users may experience loss of appetite, sleeplessness, confusion, anxiety and panic. Flashbacks may also occur.

Narcotics (including Heroin, Codeine, Morphine, Opium, Percodan) Health Risks:

Because these narcotics are generally injected, the use of contaminated needles may result in AIDS and hepatitis. Symptoms of overdose include shallow breathing, clammy skin and convulsions. An overdose may result in a coma or even death. Symptoms: Some signs of narcotic use are euphoria, drowsiness, constricted pupils and nausea. Other symptoms include itchy skin, needle or "track" marks on the arms and legs, nodding, loss of sex drive and appetite. When withdrawing from the drug, sweating, cramps and nausea occur.

Available Resources:

Campus Services:

[CUW Student Health Center](#)

Location: Albrecht 113

Phone: 262-243-4574

[CUW Counseling Center](#)

Location: Albrecht 111

Phone: 262-243-4211

Community Services:

[Starting Point of Ozaukee](#)

101 Falls Road, Suite 402

Grafton, WI 53024

262-375-1110

start@startingpointoz.org

Columbia St. Mary's Hospital Ozaukee

13111 N. Port Washington Road

Mequon, WI 53097

(262) 243-7300

Aurora Medical Center

975 Port Washington Road

Grafton, WI 53024

(262) 329-1000