

REDUCING HARM OF METHAMPHETAMINE USE

APRIL 2021

SPOTLIGHT FACTSHEET

Whether you use regularly or occasionally, there are things you can do to manage your use and reduce harm. This factsheet offers strategies to reduce the consequences associated with the use of stimulants and methamphetamines.

GENERAL SAFE USE PRACTICES: MAKE A PLAN BEFORE YOU USE

Start low and go slow: Start with a small amount and wait to see how you feel to determine its strength. When you inject or swallow, it is easier to take more than you intended or can tolerate. This can avoid overamping which can lead to troubling effects like anxiety or paranoia, overheating, increased blood pressure and rapid heartbeat.

Drink plenty of water, get sleep and eat: It is not uncommon to go days without sleeping or eating while on a “run”. This can lead to physical and psychological problems related to overamping.

Avoid using alone: Avoid using alone and only use around people you trust in case you need help. If you do use alone, tell others where you are.

Avoid mixing substances: Limit the types of other substances you use, including alcohol.

Have Naloxone (Narcan) available: Stimulants have been known to be cut with Fentanyl. Make sure you have Naloxone and know how to use it. If you are the user and alone, this won't work.

Buy from a trusted dealer: Talk to your dealer about their supplier. When you buy from someone whom you don't know, ask around to see if others have had a bad reaction to their product.

Test your drugs: Check a sample of your drugs to know what is in it. Some harm reduction coalitions provide testing strips to check for Fentanyl.

SAFER SEX WHILE USING

Use condoms, barrier contraception and lubricant: Using methamphetamines and other stimulants can make a person feel hypersexual and lead to risky sexual behavior. Sexual intercourse can last longer. Booty bumping can cause small tears in the rectal tissue, leading to hemorrhoids, rectal pain, or bleeding.

Get tested often: Get tested for sexually transmitted infections at least every three months.

Decide on sexual partner(s) ahead of time: Decide who you have sex with before you get high. Make sure you share your HIV/STI status and ask your partner to share theirs.

Avoid mixing drugs: Do not use Viagra or isopentyl nitrite (poppers) which can increase the risk of heart attack or stroke.

SAFER INJECTING WHILE USING

Keep the injection area and equipment clean: Clean skin with alcohol before you inject. Also, use a tourniquet and sterile cooker.

Avoid sharing or reusing syringes: Try to use new syringes when injecting methamphetamine. When this is not possible, take the time to clean your syringe after each use, instead of before, because you might overlook this step in your excitement to use.

Use different sites to inject: Use a different vein when you inject, so used sites and veins have a chance to heal. This will help prevent infections and abscesses.

Get to know the syringe services program in your area: Methamphetamine and other stimulants are often used intravenously. There are six community-based programs in NH that provide access to and safe disposal of sterile needles and syringes. Access to sterile syringes and safe disposal greatly reduces the spread of HIV and Hepatitis C.

Syringe Services Program	Contact information
HIV/HCV Resource Center: The Claremont Exchange Valley Regional Hospital, Claremont, NH	Phone: 603-448-8887 http://www.h2rc.org/syring-exchange
Keene Serenity Center: GROW Syringe Services, Keene, NH	Phone: 603-903-4049 https://www.facebook.com/pg/GROWSSP/
Mount Washington Valley (MWV) Supports Recovery, Conway, NH	Phone: 603-662-0668 https://www.mwvsupportsrecovery.org/
NH Harm Reduction Coalition: Hand Up Health Services Multiple locations on the Seacoast	Phone: 207-370-7187 http://nhhrc.org/handup/
NH Harm Reduction Coalition: Queen City Exchange Multiple locations in Manchester, NH	Phone: 603-463-6241 http://nhhrc.org/queen-city-exchange/
Revive Recovery Center (formerly SSANA) Multiple locations in Nashua, NH	Phone: 978-743-9636 http://www.reviverecovery.org/
Bureau of Infectious Disease Control, Phone: 603-271-4496, Email: NHBIDC@dhhs.nh.gov	

RESOURCES AND SUPPORT

The Partnership @drugfreeNH

drugfreenh.org: A safe place to gather and learn about local strategies and activities to prevent substance misuse.

Never Use Alone

Neverusealone.com or call 1-800-484-3731: To talk with a lifesaving point of contact while using substance, call Never Use Alone. No judgment, no shaming and no preaching.

The Doorway

thedorway.nh.gov or call 2-1-1 (or 1-866-444-4211): A statewide service that supports any NH resident, of any age, with a substance or alcohol concern or issue.

NH Alcohol and Drug Treatment Locator

nhtreatment.org: A searchable database with treatment agencies and individual practitioners offering substance use disorder services.

2-1-1 NH

211NH.org: A comprehensive source of information about local resources and services to help you take care of yourself.



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