

Facts about

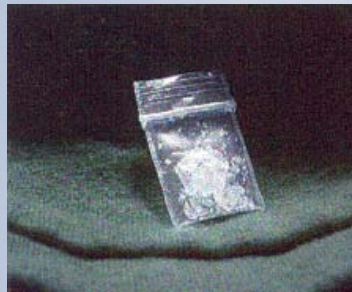
Methamphetamine

What is methamphetamine?

Methamphetamine is a highly-addictive stimulant. The potential for addiction is higher as compared to other drugs of abuse. Street names include meth, crystal meth, speed, crank, ice, glass and Tina. Meth can be snorted, smoked, injected or swallowed. Methamphetamine dramatically affects the central nervous system, altering the brain almost immediately. Meth produces euphoric effects in the brain by increasing the brain's dopamine levels. Cocaine also produces an increase in dopamine. With meth, the increase is not only more dramatic but also results in brain damage not seen in cocaine and other drugs of abuse.

What does meth look like?

Meth is often in the form of an odorless, bitter-tasting crystalline powder. It can be white, yellow or brown in color.



What are the effects of meth?

Immediate physical effects include:

- Increased heart rate, blood pressure, respiration
- Tremors
- Dilation of pupils
- Decreased fatigue and appetite

Long-term physical effects include:

- High potential for abuse, rapid dependence (in as little as three months)
- Extreme weight loss
- Damaged blood vessels in brain, possible stroke
- Damaged brain cells similar to Alzheimer's disease and epilepsy
- Damaged blood vessels in the circulatory system and skin abscesses
- Seizures, convulsions, hyperthermia; may be fatal

Long-term psychological effects include:

- Paranoia, delusions, hallucinations
- Irritability, aggression, psychotic behavior
- Depression, anxiety
- Poor memory, confusion
- Thoughts of suicide

The chronic methamphetamine user is often emaciated, appearing many decades older than their chronological age, and is often poorly groomed with skin abscesses and very poor dental hygiene. Repetitive movements, extreme agitation, violence, paranoia, and depression are common among meth users.

How can meth affect our community?

- Individual – high potential for abuse and addiction hurting the addict, their family, and the community
- For each pound of meth produced, five to seven pounds of hazardous waste are generated posing both short- and long-term environmental health risks
- Chemicals used in the production of meth are toxic and often disposed of in streams, fields, backyards, and sewage systems
- Vapors produced during the cooking process permeate the walls and carpets of houses and buildings, often making them uninhabitable
- Materials used in meth production are highly flammable and may result in explosions which injure not only the meth cooker, but their families and neighbors as well
- Property owners are often liable for cleanup; may cost thousands per site

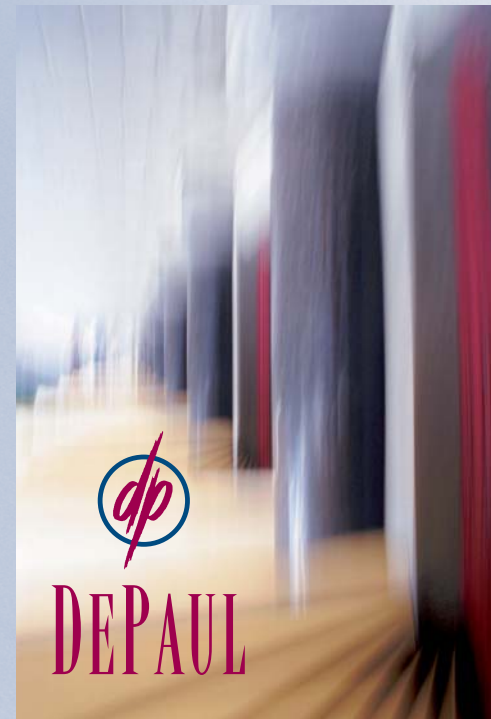
Where does methamphetamine come from?

- One-third is made in illegal, makeshift home labs and sold on the street
- Manufactured from basic and easily-accessible ingredients: ephedrine, pseudoephedrine, acetone, paint thinner, anhydrous ammonia, lye, hydrochloric acid
- Two-thirds is produced in Mexico and run by organized crime and street gangs

Possible signs of a methamphetamine lab in your community:

- Chemical odors emanating from house, detached buildings or trash bins
- Trash contains numerous mason jars, plastic bottles/jugs or glassware with unusual burns, stains or residue
- Trash contains numerous coffee filters with red stains, plastic gloves, filtered face masks, cold medicine packages
- Occupants exit house to smoke cigarettes
- Windows are always covered
- Evidence of waste dumping
- Extensive security around dwelling
- Occupants secretive and/or display paranoid or odd behavior
- Activity occurs at dwelling at odd hours; frequent short-stay visitors

If you suspect a methamphetamine lab in your community, do not enter; contact your local Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) office or the DEA New York Field Division 24-hour Communications Center at 212-337-1810.



For further information on methamphetamine and other drugs of abuse or to schedule a presentation to your community group, please contact:



DePaul's National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence – Rochester Area

at **585-719-3480** or visit our Web site at **www.ncadd-ra.org**