

# Dance party goers

what **U**  
SHOULD  
KNOW

# Rave safe

## DANCE PARTIES

Over the past few years a dance party culture has developed. This leaflet gives information on how to keep safe at dance parties.

**THERE ARE A NUMBER OF ISSUES THAT YOU NEED TO THINK ABOUT, SUCH AS:**

- the risks of taking illegal drugs
- going out with friends you can trust to look out for you
- working out how to get home safely
- staying safe from heatstroke, eg, drinking the right amount of water
- safer sex
- the dangers of mixing alcohol and drugs.

# STAYING safe

## DRUGS ARE OFTEN USED AT RAVES AND DANCE PARTIES

Possessing or supplying party drugs such as LSD, amphetamines and Ecstasy is against the law. Doing so could result in a fine or imprisonment.

The safest option is no drug use.

If you choose to use drugs, be prepared and aware of the risks.

- Drugs can affect you differently depending on the drug's contents, your mood and the situation.
- If you choose to use drugs, you should plan what you are going to take beforehand, not when you're 'out of it' at the party.
- Be around friends from the time the drug takes effect until it wears off.
- Tell your friends if you are taking drugs and what drugs they are. They can then be prepared if something goes wrong.

## go WITH a group of friends YOU can **TRUST**

- Tell someone responsible where you are going.
- Stay with your friends or check with them during the party to make sure that everyone is OK.
- Let someone know if you are leaving so they don't worry if they can't find you.

### **WORK OUT HOW TO GET HOME**

- Organise a safe driver who will stay sober, drug free and who has had some sleep.
- Arrange a back-up ride home. You may need money for a taxi or a bus.
- Don't get in the cab if you are uneasy about the driver. Request a female driver if this will make you feel safer. Always get in the back seat.
- It could be unsafe to go home alone or with someone you have only just met.

### **HAVE A LIGHT MEAL BEFORE YOU GO**

This will line your stomach and give you more energy for dancing.

# Rave safe

## **WHEN YOU GET TO THE PARTY, CHECK THE GENERAL LAYOUT FOR:**

- cold drinking-water sources and food
- the chill-out space for you to cool down
- first aid services in case of any first aid or drug-related incidents
- toilets
- the security guards and bouncers
- exits *and*
- where you are going to meet up with your friends.

## **STAYING SAFE FROM HEAT STROKE**

Heat stroke can be dangerous, even fatal. It can occur when people dance in hot spaces and don't drink enough water.

- If you're dancing, it is important to keep cool and take regular breaks from hot and crowded dance floors.
- Drinking water and eating salty snacks will keep your energy and fluids up.
- Water is better to cool you down than caffeinated energy drinks, particularly if you are taking drugs.
- In addition it is good to drink one fruit juice, power drink or caffeine-free drink per hour to help your body retain essential minerals.

**ALWAYS WATCH YOUR DRINK. SOMEONE COULD SLIP SOME POWDER OR A TABLET INTO IT WITHOUT YOU KNOWING.**

# HEAT STROKE can be **FATAL**

For the following reasons, it is important to sip 600 mLs of water each hour (eg, a filled medium-sized water bottle).

Ecstasy tends to prevent people from feeling tired or thirsty, so there is more risk of heat stroke. Some people have died from serious heat stroke when their bodies have become too hot and their blood loses its ability to clot. This is why you need to drink your 600 mLs of water each hour.

Drinking too much water while taking Ecstasy can also cause death. This happens when water builds up inside the body and brain cells, causing the brain to swell and become crushed against the inside of the skull. A few people have also died from heart attacks and brain haemorrhage. This is why you should sip no more than 600 mLs of water each hour.

## **SIGNS OF HEAT STROKE ARE:**

- not sweating
- cramps in the legs, arms and back
- headache, dizziness and fatigue
- vomiting
- dark yellow/brown urine and not much of it
- sudden tiredness, irritation and confusion.

If any of these things happen, it is crucial that you cool down as quickly as possible. Go to a chill-out area. Remove some clothing and apply cold water or ice to the body, eg, the neck, head, wrists and armpits, and sip water. Seek medical attention immediately!

Ring 111

If someone collapses and is unconscious, don't give water but call an ambulance immediately!

# safer sex

Drugs can affect your decision making, so be aware of what you are doing.

- Always carry and use condoms and lube.
- Condoms protect you and your partner from HIV, other sexually transmissible infections and unplanned pregnancy.
- Use them even if you are on the Pill.
- Be aware of rape – keep in safe areas.

**ASK FRIENDS TO WATCH  
OUT FOR YOU AND DO  
THE SAME FOR THEM.**

# CHECKLIST of what you need to take WITH YOU:

- tickets
- money for taxi, drinks, etc
- condoms and lube
- identification (People may need to know who you are if something goes wrong.)
- a filled water bottle. (Not all dance parties provide water, and some charge for it.)
- cool clothing for dancing
- for an outdoor party:
  - suitable footwear, warmer layers and some water-proof gear
  - you may need a torch, blanket, tent, sunblock and sunglasses.





# THE DRUG SCENE

**THE EFFECTS OF DRUGS CAN CHANGE, DEPENDING ON WHERE YOU ARE, WHO YOU ARE WITH, HOW PHYSICALLY FIT YOU ARE AND HOW YOU'RE FEELING.**

- If you're not feeling too good about yourself, are anxious, depressed or moody, then using drugs is likely to make you feel worse.
- Having no problems with one drug does not mean that you won't have any problems with another.
- Even if you use the same drug again, it may affect you differently.
- It's hard to know how strong a drug is going to be or how it will affect you before you take it.
- If you choose to take drugs, only take a small amount of the drug and wait for it to take effect before taking the rest. Illegal drugs do not have a consistent quality, so each tablet may have a different effect.
- Be aware that the lighter your body weight, the more powerful the effects of drugs.

# ECSTASY, speed, LSD and FANTASY

**REMEMBER THAT POSSESSING OR  
SUPPLYING DRUGS IS AGAINST THE LAW.  
YOU COULD BE FINED OR SENT TO PRISON.**

## **IT IS DANGEROUS TO MIX DRUGS**

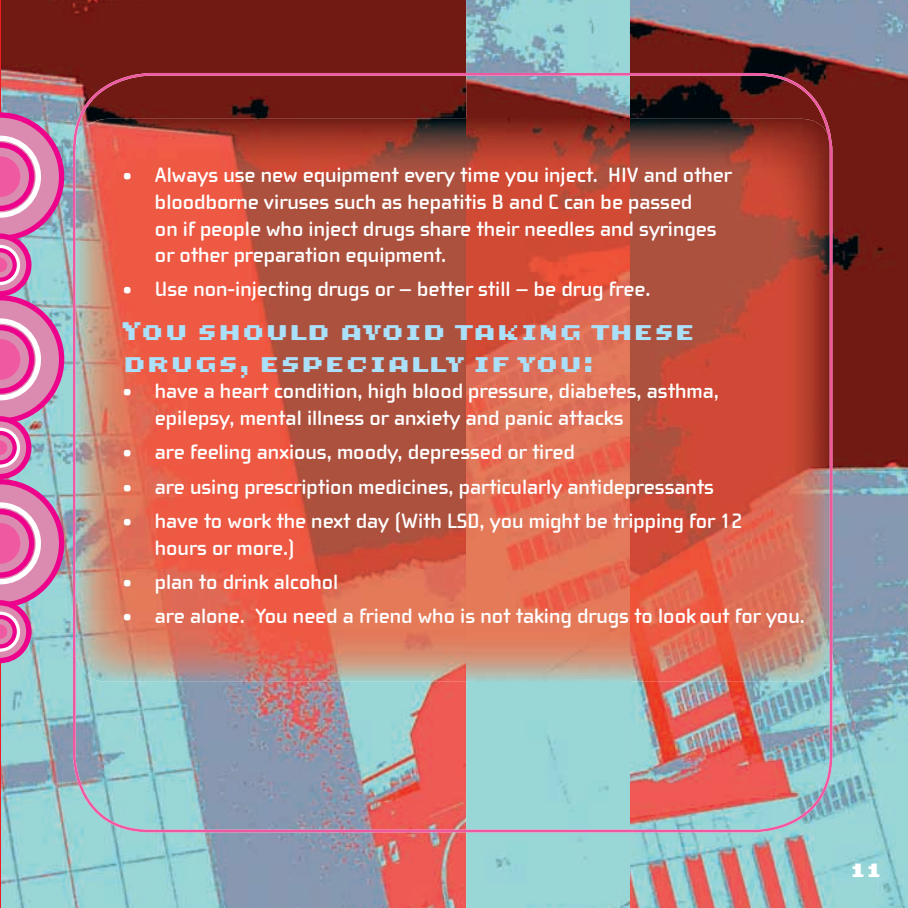
- People react differently to different combinations of drugs.
- Avoid using alcohol with stimulants like Ecstasy. The alcohol tends to cancel out the subtle effects of these drugs and will dehydrate you and make you more prone to heat stroke.
- Taking more than one stimulant (like Ecstasy and speed) can be very powerful and have a very different effect from taking twice as much of one drug. It can also strain your heart.
- Avoid using Fantasy with alcohol as the combined depressant effects greatly increase the risk of an overdose.

## **INJECTING DRUGS**

If you are using drugs, this is by far the most dangerous way.

- There is a greater risk of an overdose if you are injecting drugs, so never inject alone.

**AVOID BUYING OR ACCEPTING DRUGS FROM  
PEOPLE YOU DON'T KNOW. YOU CAN NEVER  
BE CERTAIN WHAT YOU ARE GETTING.**

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- Always use new equipment every time you inject. HIV and other bloodborne viruses such as hepatitis B and C can be passed on if people who inject drugs share their needles and syringes or other preparation equipment.
  - Use non-injecting drugs or – better still – be drug free.

### **YOU SHOULD AVOID TAKING THESE DRUGS, ESPECIALLY IF YOU:**

- have a heart condition, high blood pressure, diabetes, asthma, epilepsy, mental illness or anxiety and panic attacks
- are feeling anxious, moody, depressed or tired
- are using prescription medicines, particularly antidepressants
- have to work the next day (With LSD, you might be tripping for 12 hours or more.)
- plan to drink alcohol
- are alone. You need a friend who is not taking drugs to look out for you.

# ECSTASY (E)

Pure Ecstasy is made from MDMA (3,4-methylenedioxymethamphetamine). But what's sold as Ecstasy may actually have no MDMA, or may include one or more of the following drugs:

- speed – see page 15
- 2C drugs (phenethylamines) – see page 18
- piperazines (eg, BZP, TFMPP)
- cathinone derivatives (eg, mephedrone, methedrone, 4-MEC).

BZP (benzylpiperazine) alone has similar effects to amphetamines. When combined with BZP, TFMPP (trifluoromethylphenylpiperazine) has mild hallucinogenic effects similar to Ecstasy. In high doses, piperazines can cause hallucinations, fits and slowed breathing.

Cathinone derivatives have similar effects to cocaine, amphetamine or Ecstasy. In high doses they can cause hallucinations and psychosis.

Ecstasy has effects that are part stimulating and part hallucinogenic. Ecstasy comes as tablets, capsules or powder and is usually swallowed. Most people feel the effects of Ecstasy after 20–30 minutes, but it can sometimes take longer, so don't rush into taking more. When the effects wear off, you'll probably feel tired and down. You may have problems concentrating, so take it easy and avoid making rash decisions.

**REMEMBER TO SIP NO MORE OR  
LESS THAN 600 MLs (EG, A FILLED  
MEDIUM-SIZED WATER BOTTLE) OF  
WATER PER HOUR.**

# LSD

(LYSERGIC ACID)

LSD is a psychedelic drug and changes the ways people perceive the world. LSD is usually sold as small squares (tabs or blotters) of paper or as tiny tablets called 'microdots'.

Usually LSD is swallowed and takes about 30–60 minutes to take effect, but it can take up to 2 hours. The effects last from 6 to 8 hours, although some trips last up to 24 hours.

For some people, trips can be terrifying and disturbing. Often it depends on their mood prior to taking the drug. If someone gets spooked, try to take their mind off what is frightening them. It is important to remind them that it is just the drug and it will end soon.

Some people also report feeling anxious and depressed for the next day or two or can have 'flashbacks', where they feel as if they are tripping again. They may feel better in familiar surroundings.

# speed

(methamphetamine and amphetamine sulphate)

Speed is a stimulant and is usually in the form of a whitish or yellow-brown crystalline powder. Speed is most commonly available as methamphetamine, which is stronger than amphetamine sulphate. The clear crystal form of methamphetamine, known as ice or pure, is very potent.

Most people find that speed makes their mouth dry and their jaw tense (chewing gum helps). It also makes their appetite and desire for sleep disappear. Users are prone to dehydration. It's worse if you're sweating as well.

Speed can make you feel energetic, alert, talkative and overly confident. It can also be unpleasant, making you agitated and moody. In some users, it can trigger underlying mental illness, and long-term speed use has been linked to aggressive behaviour. Using speed also puts you at higher risk of having a stroke.

When coming down from speed, you may feel tired, hungry and depressed. It can have a laxative effect for some people. These after-effects should pass in a few days.

Speed is often impure because it is easily mixed with other things like glucose, Epsom salts, Ajax and caffeine powder. Some people inject speed. This is by far the most dangerous way of using any drug.



# FANTASY

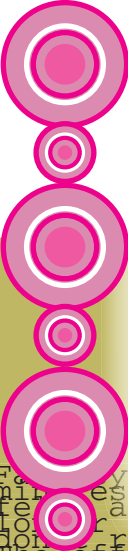
What is sold as Fantasy may actually be one of four drugs:

1. gamma-hydroxybutyric acid (GHB)
2. gamma-butyrolactone (GBL)
3. 1,4-butanediol (1,4-B)
4. Gamma-aminobutyric acid (GABA)

GBL, 1,4-B and GABA are chemically related drugs and have similar effects to GHB, but GBL is usually 2–3 times stronger and 1,4-B takes longer to take effect. Always check which substance you are taking and how much.

Fantasy is a depressant, which is taken for its relaxing and mood-enhancing effects. It is usually in the form of a colourless, odourless, salty-tasting liquid and is taken by mouth.





Fantasy may take at least 20 minutes before any effects are felt, and it can sometimes take longer so, as with other drugs, don't rush into taking more. The effects can last anywhere between 1 and 8 hours or longer, depending on the dosage, and differ between people. The same dose may make one person 'high' but put someone else to sleep. Fantasy may make you feel good and increase your confidence, but it can be dangerous and is very unpredictable. There is a very fine line between a dose giving a 'high' and an overdose, which can cause convulsions, severe breathing problems, a coma and even death.

Avoid using Fantasy with alcohol as the combined depressant effects greatly increase the risk of an overdose. People can become addicted to Fantasy with long-term frequent use.

Call an ambulance immediately if you can't wake someone who has taken Fantasy.

# DESIGNER DRUGS, 2C DRUGS (phenethylamines)

- 2C drugs are a range of substances derived from amphetamine, including 2C-I, 2C-B, 2C-T-2 and 2C-T-7. These chemicals are usually available as either powder or tablets. 2C drugs have psychedelic, empathogenic (producing feelings of empathy and connectedness), stimulant and visual effects and are sometimes used as an additive to Ecstasy.
- Onset time and duration of action differ depending on the type of 2C drug. Onset can be rapid or take up to 90 minutes. Duration of action can be between 3 and 12 hours.
- Health risks posed by the 2C drugs partly derive from the fine line between a dose producing the desired effect and an overdose. An unpleasant experience or overdose can easily occur. Overdoses have resulted in delirium, violence and death. Swallowing is the least risky way to take the drug, sniffing more risky, and injecting much riskier as only a fraction of an oral dose is needed.
- Mixing or stacking these and other substances can be very risky because it can worsen the risk of an overdose. Avoid taking 2C drugs alongside other party drugs or prescription drugs.

# SPECIAL K, VITAMIN K, KIT KAT [KETAMINE]

- K is usually a powder or a liquid. It is used for general anaesthesia. However, when taken at a smaller dose it creates a dissociative effect. This means it can make you feel disconnected from yourself and from reality.
- The peak tripping experience lasts 30–60 seconds and the whole action lasts approximately 1–3 hours. The length of the experience varies depending on the method of consumption.
- Because there is a small difference between a dose that produces a trip and a dose that produces unconsciousness, it is easy to overdose on K, and users are at high risk of accidental injury. Sniffing is less risky than injecting.
- Regular use of K can lead to dependence. Tolerance builds quickly, so the user needs higher doses to achieve the same effect. The drug's tripping effect lessens with prolonged use, but it is common for personality changes and psychotic symptoms to occur in regular users.
- The comedown from K can be unpleasant, with a mixture of nausea and fatigue. It may take 24–48 hours before you feel completely normal again.



Website information about:

Party drugs: [www.cads.org.nz/sorted/drugs/](http://www.cads.org.nz/sorted/drugs/)  
[www.drugfoundation.org.nz/drug-info-and-support/](http://www.drugfoundation.org.nz/drug-info-and-support/)

National drug policy: [www.ndp.govt.nz](http://www.ndp.govt.nz)

Where to find help: [www.alcoholdrughelp.org.nz](http://www.alcoholdrughelp.org.nz) or  
[www.youthline.co.nz](http://www.youthline.co.nz)

Revised June 2012, 05/2017. Code **HE1304**



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New Zealand Government