

#8910

STIMULANTS

Grade Levels: 8-13+

40 minutes

CAMBRIDGE EDUCATIONAL 1999



DESCRIPTION

Stimulants excite the central nervous system and all can be psychologically and physically addictive. They are also the most widely used drugs in America and include caffeine, nicotine, amphetamines, methamphetamines, and cocaine. Focuses on the characteristics and symptoms of stimulant use and abuse. Includes personal testimonies and expert opinions.

ACADEMIC STANDARDS

Subject Area: Health

- ◆ Standard: Understands aspects of substance use and abuse
 - Benchmark: Knows the short- and long-term consequences of the use of alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs

INSTRUCTIONAL GOALS

1. To study the history of stimulants.
2. To identify the dangers of stimulants.
3. To name the different types of stimulants.
4. To identify the side effects of stimulants.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The History of Cocaine

The Incas probably were the first to use cocaine. Up to 5,000 years ago, they began to chew the leaves of the coca bush. Cocaine could only be taken in leaf form until 1858, when it was isolated from the plant material by German chemist Albert Niemann. Shortly after it was purified, people began to inhale it into the nose and to inject it.

The use of cocaine in its pure form led to the first major epidemic of cocaine use at the end of the 1800s and the beginning of the 1900s. At first, many people thought that cocaine was a harmless drug. As more and more people tried it and became addicted, it gained a reputation as a highly dangerous, very addictive drug.

By 1930, 60 years after people in the United States began using cocaine, use of the drug in this country practically disappeared. In the 1960s, cocaine again began to be

seen as a harmless stimulant. The current cocaine epidemic began leveling off in the mid-80s when a new and easily made form of cocaine called “crack” was developed. Crack produced a greater high, but also proved to be even more addictive. The advent of crack drove the high cost of cocaine lower, leading to increased use of the original drug.

The History of Amphetamines and Methamphetamines

Amphetamines were created in 1887, but their stimulant properties were not discovered until 1927.

Though laws were passed to control its use, amphetamine consumption continually rose in the United States. In 1958, 75,000 pounds of amphetamines were produced, enough to supply every American citizen with about 20 doses.

Methamphetamines were first produced in 1919. In the 1970s, a freebase form of smokable methamphetamines, called “ice,” hit the streets. Brought to Hawaii by Filipino gangs in the late 1970s, ice is almost pure methamphetamine. In 1989, ice came to California, and is now available in major cities throughout the United States, although it is mostly used in Hawaii, in major cities along the West Coast, and in Texas.

As amphetamines and methamphetamines became more tightly controlled by drug laws, illicit chemists began to make variations of the two stimulants in order to escape the strict laws and penalties applying to amphetamines and methamphetamines. It didn't take long for the laws to be changed, but in the interim many other variations of the amphetamines were tried by humans with unexpected and sometimes deadly results.

AFTER SHOWING

Discussion Items and Questions

1. Give examples of legal and illegal stimulants.
2. How do stimulants affect the brain?
3. What effects do stimulants produce? Describe some adverse side effects associated with stimulants.
4. Discuss some reasons why stimulants are abused.
5. What treatments are amphetamines used for and what form do they come in? Are amphetamines addictive?
6. How do amphetamines affect the body? What side effects do amphetamines produce?
7. Describe some long-term effects associated with amphetamines. What is “amphetamine psychosis”?
8. What is Ritalin's primary use and how is it being abused today?
9. Describe some slang terms for methamphetamine and its different forms.
10. Describe some side effects of methamphetamine use. How many times must a person use methamphetamine before they can become addicted?
11. How does nicotine affect the body?
12. What is nicotine's primary use in nature?



13. Is nicotine addictive? Describe withdrawal symptoms associated with nicotine.
14. What is the most commonly used drug today? What are its most common forms?
15. Describe some of the effects and side effects that caffeine produces.
16. Give some withdrawal symptoms associated with caffeine.
17. What was cocaine first used for?
18. What effects/side effects are produced by cocaine?
19. What is *crack*? What adverse side effects are associated with using crack?
20. Discuss what constitutes legal and illegal stimulant abuse.
21. Discuss acceptable uses for legal stimulants.
22. Who could you go to if you or a friend had any questions or problems about legal and/or illegal stimulants?

RELATED RESOURCES



Captioned Media Program

- Cocaine to Crack: Gina's Story #2046
- Crack: The Big Lie #2050
- PCP & Ketamine #8855

World Wide Web



The following Web sites complement the contents of this guide; they were selected by professionals who have experience in teaching deaf and hard of hearing students. Every effort was made to select accurate, educationally relevant, and "kid-safe" sites. However, teachers should preview them before use. The U.S. Department of Education, the National Association of the Deaf, and the Captioned Media Program do not endorse the sites and are not responsible for their content.

- **STREET DRUGS**

<http://www.streetdrugs.org/>

Presents eleven warning signs of violent student behavior, numerous clear photographs of illegal drugs, and other drug-related information.

- **THE NATIONAL CLEARINGHOUSE FOR ALCOHOL AND DRUG INFORMATION**

<http://www.health.org/>

Numerous topics on various kinds of illegal drugs. Explains cocaine, drug abuse, fact sheets; links to "Teens," "Tips for Teens," and more.

- **COCAINE ANONYMOUS**

<http://www.ca.org/>

A fellowship of men and women who share their experience, strength and hope with each other so that they may solve their common problem and help others to recover from their addiction.

