

# HOW TO RESPOND TO AN OVERDOSE

If your friend or family member is overdosing

Call an Ambulance

Put them in the recovery position

Administer naloxone if they've had opioids

Stay with them until you're sure they're safe

remembering that if you nod off and stay in the same place for a while, it can compress your nerves and hinder the blood flow. Your limbs can 'fall asleep' and if you are there too long, you can end up with permanent nerve damage.

I know three people who came to the attention of the police because they nodded off at the wheel while parked or at a traffic light. Phil was lucky he didn't end up in jail that night we met up with him. They are all lucky they didn't nod off while they were driving and end up in serious accidents. I have to say,

if you get any of this gear, try and find a 'designated driver' or take the train — there is more than one way to die on gear.

I personally missed the 'purple gear' once it was gone. It had a big initial hit and it was a wild ride — more bang than heroin but longer legs than fentanyl alone. But it came with a big risk, too.

We're lucky no-one died from our gear, probably because we warned people. If you had a dealer who didn't warn you and you didn't know what you were getting — or if you ignored good advice when it came your way — it could end in tragedy. ■

## BE PREPARED TO SAVE A LIFE!

**Naloxone (brand names include Narcan, Nyxoid and Prenoxad) reverses opioid overdose. Everyone who uses opioids or loves someone who uses opioids should have naloxone in their house, car or backpack.**

As part of a Commonwealth government trial, you can get naloxone for free at many pharmacists in NSW. If you have trouble finding some, call NUAA's PeerLine on our free number 1800 644 413 — we can find a chemist near you that stocks it. You can also get it home delivered for free if you live in NSW by ordering it from our NSP Shop on the NUAA website.

Some people may have had negative experiences with naloxone before, but remember to stay calm, follow the training you have been given, and everything will go ok — including no precipitated withdrawal occurrences. Please note that naloxone's opioid-reversing effect will wear off (around 30 to 90 minutes) so **STAY WITH THEM!** They may need more naloxone. All packs of naloxone contain more than one dose. **ALSO**, using more opioids in this time will only heighten the risk of another overdose event for that person.

Take care to stay with other people and don't have another shot until the naloxone has worn off and you've assessed the situation properly.



# 2C



# WHAT?

**Jesse had been looking forward to an epic live show of psychedelic projections and pumping beats. But when he couldn't get 2C-B he decided to take the mystery powder he was offered instead.**

I had been using party drugs for a few years when I had my big bad trip. Being a young drug enthusiast, I always paid strict attention to the advice in drug education classes. I never took cocktails of different drugs. I never took more of a drug out of impatience because the first dose hadn't hit me yet. I bought my drugs through the same trusted source.

All in all, I was a smart drug user, at least until 'that' night when I had my all-too-vivid trip.

I had tickets to see a Brazilian electronic artist who had a 3D projection live show at the Sydney

Opera House. With a show like that, with spectacular visuals promised, my course was set: I was going to get psychedelics.

All my usual dealers were unavailable, but I arranged to get some 2C-B through my brother, as I had on a few occasions in the past. Keen observers will note that I had already broken a rule. He may have been my brother, but he wasn't my usual source, so I had no idea what I would end up with.

On the night of the gig, my brother and friends, Amy and Jodie, arrived at my house for pre-drinks. Instead of pills, my brother produced 4 tiny satty bags. The powder inside looked kinda like yellowish cocaine. He said there was trouble getting the usual stuff from his dealer, and that this stuff was basically the same — but he did warn me it was meant to be much stronger. It was definitely 2C-SOMETHING but whether it was 2C-E or 2C-I, nobody was sure.



**He said this stuff was basically the same — but he did warn me it was meant to be much stronger. It was definitely 2C-SOMETHING but whether it was 2C-E or 2C-I or whatever, nobody was sure.**

It all felt a bit off. The colour and texture of the drugs was a bit suspicious, but we figured in this day and age, the reality is that you never REALLY know where your drugs are coming from. So, we decided to roll with it.

We all had a few beers, then we all did half a bag each and left for the Opera House. My first mistake was accepting mystery psychedelics — I knew I shouldn't take a drug if I didn't know what it was. But I made my second mistake right then and there — I took the rest of the baggy with me.

A few beers were drunk on the way — then we ran into a friend before the gig who had cocaine, so I did a line of that, too. Another ingredient to the drug cocktail.

Three hours had passed since I had taken the 2C-B by the time the Opera House staff asked us to proceed inside and I still wasn't feeling much of the effects of the psychedelics. So I decided to rack (snort) the rest of my bag. That decision was definitely misplaced confidence spurred by all the pre-drinks.

So now I was breaking all the harm reduction advice I'd ever gotten and breaking all the rules I had ever put in place. I was cocktailing drugs —

alcohol, cocaine and 2C-something; taking drugs from an unknown source; and taking more when I hadn't felt the first dose hit. But, hey? I had been in similar situations before, nothing had gone wrong then, so surely I would be fine. In fact, I couldn't imagine a universe where I couldn't 'handle my drugs'!

I was wrong. I spent the majority of the show curled into a ball on my seat while terrifying shapes melted in and out of the heads in the crowd for 2 hours.

When the show ended, the drugs hadn't worn off. It got worse rather than better. Everyone wanted to go for more beers but I made it clear I wasn't coping. The floor was lava. And so were all the buildings and cars for that matter!

Luckily the Uber that Amy ordered to take me home wasn't made of lava, but the driver certainly was. I was so glad that she got in that Uber with me, to take care of me. I don't think I could have made it home without her.

Back at my house, Amy tried everything to get me back down to earth. She put on some cartoons to distract and sooth me. But the cartoons I usually liked rocked back and forth between being too fast and too slow for me to comprehend.

I tried smoking weed to calm myself down, but the weed gave me insane visions of huge starscapes and galaxies folding in on themselves. For about an hour, I just paced back and forth in my boxers and my bathrobe, stopping only to repeat the word "HUGE".

Things eventually slowed down and I got to sleep.

Next day, I bought Amy breakfast to say thanks for babysitting me. I'm so grateful to this day that she was there to trip-sit me in my time of need. I won't forget it.

Looking back, I figure I made a fair few elementary school mistakes that night, but to be honest there is only one that I felt was a glaring error. After all, I had previously taken drug cocktails and bought drugs from people who weren't my usual dealer, and I had been fine. I know there are risks to breaking these safety rules, but I still consider myself a responsible drug user.

But after that night I learnt there are some rules that absolutely should never be broken. I should have listened to my brother when he said these drugs came with a warning. We were not meant to take the whole bag.

No matter how obscure the source

## 2C LOWDOWN

2C-x substances like 2C-B, 2C-E, and 2C-I all have varying psychedelic and entactogenic effects.

**Entactogens =** encourage empathy, emotional communion, oneness, relatedness, emotional openness.

**Psychedelics =** trigger non-ordinary experiences, altering the way we think, what we see, our sense of time, and our emotions.

2C-x compounds are usually sold as a white powder (in sattie bags or caps), but can be pressed into pills resembling ecstasy. Substances in the 2C-x series vary in their effects and duration.

is, drug dealers will almost always have a piece of advice when it comes to experimental drugs. My regret was not heeding the warning of the dealer and missing one of the coolest live shows I could ever see.

Until prohibition is repealed, all we have are each other. We need to be sharing our experiences and info about the risks of the drugs we are taking, and how to manage those risks. And we need to be taking a leaf out of Amy's book and being there for our friends and peers if something does go wrong. ■

# Yes, You Can Overdose On Stimulants!

Taking too many stimulants like ice, ecstasy, speed and coke can result in an overdose that can affect your body or your mind – and sometimes both.

## BODY

### PHYSICAL SYMPTOMS

Very thirsty

Sweating and body chills

Nausea/vomiting

Trouble breathing

As OD progresses, may stop sweating and get very hot

Seizure/fits

Stroke

Unconsciousness

#### When does fitting happen?

When someone uses repeatedly for a few days, pushing their body hard into toxic overload and doesn't eat or sleep during that time.

#### Will it stop?

It will stop on its own after a few minutes. However they may fit again and need to be checked by ambos.

#### How can I help a friend who is fitting?

1. Make the area safe, moving hard edges away
2. Hold them gently but firmly, without restraining them
3. Don't put anything in their mouth – they will NOT swallow their tongue
4. Call an ambulance on 000
5. After fitting stops, put them in the recovery position (on their side) to keep the airways clear
6. Stay with them till help comes.

## MIND

### PSYCHOLOGICAL SYMPTOMS

Anxiety

Sudden mood swings

Extreme fearfulness

Paranoia/delusions

Extreme anger/violence

Psychosis

#### When can psychosis happen?

Psychosis can happen after 1 big dose but more usually after using stimulants for a few days.

#### Will it stop?

It usually stops on its own 6 hours to a few days after stimulant use stops.

#### How do I help a friend in psychosis?

1. Stay calm, talk quietly, be non-threatening and soothing
2. Move to a quiet, lowlight area
3. Acknowledge what is going on for them – don't tell them to "just calm down"
4. Offer food and water
5. Distract them by talking about their interests
6. Monitor physical signs. If they get aggressive, make sure you are safe
7. Call 000 for an ambulance or take them to Emergency at your closest hospital.



## Useful tips on:

# SUPPORTING your mates



Whether you're new to drugs, or an old hand, at some point you're going to be around a mate having a challenging, overwhelming or distressing time on drugs, usually due to a stimulant or hallucinogen overdose. This is a tough situation to be in and can be distressing for you, too. We know how hard it is to see a friend having a rough time. So here are some top tips from peer experience that might help you to support and guide someone through this experience.

### 1 Stay calm

The way you react will affect the person. Take a few deep and even breaths to reduce your own heartbeat. If you remain calm, your friend will feel this energy and it may help them relax.

### 2 Relocate

Move them away from bright lights and action if you can. People who are distressed are often overwhelmed by too much stimulation (mental, physical, emotional, environmental). An easy first step is changing the environment to somewhere quiet and calm, preferably away from other people.

### 4 Move slowly and calmly

Avoid sudden movements and confrontational situations. People who are distressed are often experiencing a sense of 'fight-or-flight' and will be super hypervigilant (aware) of everything. Move your body in the calm way you'd like to see from them — our mind and body like to mirror other people's behaviour. By moving calmly, your friends may start to mirror this slow and calm energy. Likewise, a panicked response from you or others, can escalate their state of distress. Even friends with the best of intentions to help can increase distress. If there are people around who are making things worse, ask them to leave or move away from them.

### 3 Sit together

Encourage or suggest for your friend sit down. This can stop them from hurting themselves, or becoming more worked up, and can help reduce their heartrate and anxiety levels by reducing physical exertion. If they choose to sit down, sit beside them not in front of them. Sitting beside someone is less confrontational. If your friend does not want to sit down, do not force them to. Try to stay beside them.

### 5 Distraction

When people are distressed, their mind is focused on challenging thoughts and feelings. Distracting them from these thoughts could help to shift their feelings. Most people will become distracted by talking about stuff they love doing, so try and get them talking about their interests to get their head in a more comfy space.

### 6 Remind them the experience is temporary

People who are distressed may feel like they will be permanently stuck in this drug experience. Remind them that the way they are feeling is a side-effect of the drug, and that the drugs will wear off.

### 7 Focus on breathing

A tactic to reduce distress is to ask them to concentrate on controlling their breathing — evenly and deeply. This can help someone overcome anxiety and slow a racing heartbeat.

“  
Most people will become distracted by talking about stuff they love doing.”

### 8 Cool their face

Put a cold pack or ice on their cheekbones or suggest they pour some chilled water over their face — or have a cold shower if you're at home. This will slow their heart rate and help reset their body emotionally to a neutral state. It's called the 'dive reflex' and all mammals have it.

“  
Move your body in the calm way you'd like to see from them — our mind and body like to mirror other people's behaviour.”

### 9 Look after their needs

Offer food and water. Fruit is good. If they've been active and/or sweating a lot, try and add something salty. You'll be glad you threw that little packet of salted peanuts in your kit. Encourage them to keep sipping water.

### 10 Avoid smoking

Without making it a big deal, discourage them from smoking if you can; the heart is having enough trouble getting oxygen through the body.

### 11 Stay with them

It may only take a few minutes to wind themselves up again.

CONTINUED  
NEXT PAGE

## 12 Validate their feelings

If they are delusional, don't challenge them. They may be talking to people who aren't there or be fearful of things that aren't really happening. Respond in a calm and validating way, being sure not to panic, freak out or laugh at their delusions. Telling them that they are imagining things or trying to disagree won't help. Don't buy into their reality necessarily but hear them out and validate any feelings they have associated with the delusions. People experiencing psychosis may be close to panic and can become frightened, irrational, aggressive and sometimes violent. Listening and not freaking out will often calm them down and promote trust between the two of you.

## 13 Monitor symptoms

If they are physically unwell, monitor their pulse, breathing and conscious state. If you know they are on prescribed medication or have a medical condition that could complicate things — like diabetes or asthma, for example — check in with them about it.

## 14 Get help if you need it

If your friend is very agitated and you are concerned about their safety, or you are worried that your friend is very unwell and at risk physically or mentally, call an ambulance on 000. Give them as much info as you can about your friend's symptoms — body and mind; what drugs (including alcohol) they have taken; and anything you may know about their general health that could be helpful, like the aforementioned diabetes and asthma.

**“ If they are delusional, don't challenge them. ”**

## 15 Self-care

Once the crisis is over, make sure you engage in some grounding exercises, and self-care. Your nervous system may be worked up from seeing someone you love in distress. Take some deep breaths, and sit down with a cup of tea, or something to eat. You may want to talk the experience through with someone. And thank yourself! You've given emotional energy to care for your friend and keep them safe.

**AND  
LASTLY**

## DONT BE AFRAID TO REACH OUT

**Don't beat yourself up if you don't feel up to supporting someone through a tricky drug experience. It doesn't make you a bad friend or a failure. People train for years to help people during a crisis.**

### Getting help:

If you are concerned about the person's safety, call 000 for an ambulance. If you are at an event, look for support services, care spaces, rovers and first aid workers.

You can also call, text or DM someone who is close to the person affected — maybe a best friend, partner or family member — to come and give support, take them home or get them professional care.

Call Peerline on 1800 644 413 (business hours) to talk to peers about supporting people or to debrief after you have been through an intense experience. ■

# GAMMA HYDROXY BUTYRATE / GHB / G

## GET YOUR DOSE RIGHT

There is no such thing as a 'standard' dose of G.

Every batch, every person, every day is different.

Go slow – split your dose. Have a little bit first, then top up.

## GUARD YOURSELF AGAINST OVERDOSE

Make sure you're with a friend and that they know what you've taken.

Don't let your friends to 'sleep it off' – try to wake them.

Ring 000 quickly if you suspect overdose

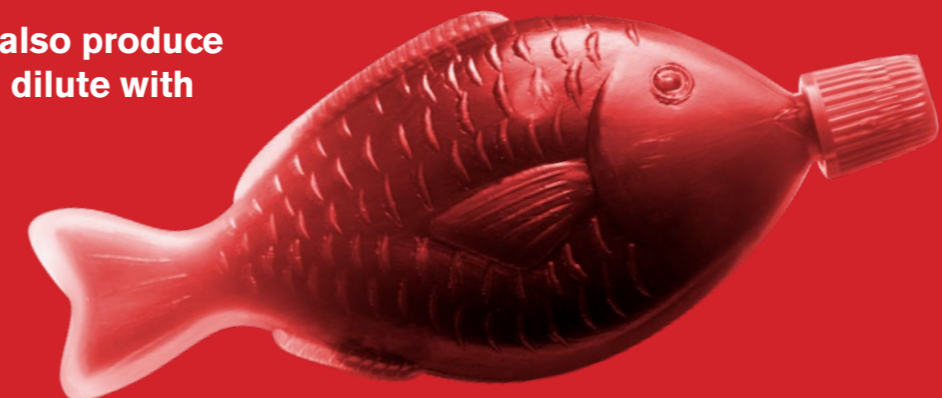
## G DOESN'T MIX WELL WITH OTHER DRUGS

Drinking alcohol on G increases the risk of overdose.

Combining ice with G does not reduce the risk of overdose.

Always swallow G – it's an acid and will burn your veins if injected.

Booty bumping may also produce scarring. If you must, dilute with water by at least 1:1.





# TALES OF K

## Lyla, Jane and Belle clue us in

**People use drugs for many reasons. These are 3 stories about ketamine — along with some tips for reducing the harms for people who choose to go the K way.**

### Lyla's story

If I could only use one word to describe ketamine, it would be 'wobbly'. My body feels not quite in sync with itself and my head becomes very wobbly! It's like the control centre of the brain is still

there, still aware of what's going on, but there's a distance between it and your foot and there's a delay telling it to move to that particular spot.

But it's not like other forms of dissociation, which can make you feel isolated or numb. It's very relaxed, like yes, there is a distance, but I'm happy chilling back here and watching.

That's where the risk of injury can come in. I have heard many stories where folks have been lying or sitting down and taking ketamine and don't

realise how wobbly they have gotten until they stand up and try to walk or dance. I find that if I do hurt myself, I still feel the pain but it's over there, not here. I start to think, 'maybe I didn't hurt myself as badly as I thought'. With some experience, though, it becomes easier to recognise, with an immediate injury, that I should go get it checked out at Medical even when I think it's 'not that bad'.

The struggle I have is with chronic or recurring injuries. I have arthritis in my knees, so they are often in some degree of pain. When I take ketamine and I am dancing, it's hard to tell when I should back off and let

my knees rest. Yes, I feel the soreness, but it doesn't seem all that bad. I'm slowly learning to be a bit more careful because after the ketamine wears off, my knees don't hesitate to tell me I've overdone it!

Don't get me wrong, though, I do enjoy ketamine for many reasons. It is

short-acting compared to other party drugs, which means I'm not committed the whole night. If I decide I want to do something else, I wait an hour or 2, not 10 or 12.

It is also easier to titrate — this means you can take a little more and get proportionally higher.

Not every drug allows this — some you take a little more and it will do next to nothing, others a little can send you off the deep end into a crisis.

Of course, as with all drugs, this will depend on set and setting and what else you've taken.

### Jane's story

I had my first experiences with ketamine at university in Melbourne. I mostly used it when I was out drinking and partying with friends. But I didn't really think about ketamine that much back then, or its therapeutic potential. It was just something to make music sound better and make the alcohol hit harder so I didn't drink as much.

A few years ago, I went to a pretty low place. I went through a depression where I would look at the world around me, and everything would seem flat, with not a lot of depth to it. And I couldn't really see beyond the surface. It had me questioning my life, like "What's the purpose of this all? Is there anything more than this?"

I knew I needed to do something BIG to change how I was feeling. That I needed to break out of my comfort zone and the path that I was following. So I decided to move overseas: to Amsterdam.

I wasn't drawn to Amsterdam necessarily because of drugs, though I had heard the city offers some of the purest in the world — and really cheap as well. I chose it because it's a lovely mixture of a kind of Scandinavian energy and Berlin edginess. It's also got a really great techno music scene — I love techno. It's a very happy city. You ride your bikes around. And there's a lot of

sustainability stuff happening, and it feels like a little village but with an international city vibe. So, yeah, it's a wonderful city.

Shortly after I arrived, I went to a music festival with friends. It was held on this really beautiful sandy island. I wasn't really drinking at this event, so one of my friends offered me some ketamine. The experience I had that day was a turning point in my life. Here I was, on this island, surrounded by people, looking at life through a dissociated perspective. This phrase just kept repeating over and over again to the rhythm of the music: "Everything is okay. Everything is like it's meant to be. And it's just perfect as is". I think this was one of the first times in my life that I ever felt like this. I realised that I'd never before seen everything as okay.

That adventure really helped to break down my own mental barriers and get an objective view on the world and my place in it.

The experience stayed with me for months afterwards.

I felt like I'd shed the dark lens that I saw things through. Instead, I saw more depth and colour to the world.

What's more, I lost some of my expectations around what I thought my life should be.

I experimented more with ketamine during my 2 years in the Netherlands — mostly on the weekend in social settings, instead of the alcohol

I would have normally used. I am a bit of an introvert so I loved the ability to go into my own little world and dancing to maybe techno or house music in a basement somewhere. I enjoyed the ability to have different views and thoughts on life.

I now have a lot of respect for the way drugs can play a positive role in people's lives. We are told that drugs are negative. We don't talk much about the positive role they can have. But for me, ketamine wasn't just a party drug, it helped me change the way I saw myself and the world.

My experiences with the dissociative drug helped me to shift my thinking so that I was able to think about my world more objectively and become more self-aware. I learned to analyse my behaviours, open my mind to new ways of doing things and become less rigid in how I approached life.

I wouldn't say that the way I used ketamine is the best way to deal with depression, but my experiences with ketamine have been therapeutic for me.

**We are told that drugs are negative. We don't talk much about the positive role they can have.**

## Belle's story

I first tried K (ketamine) in the late '90s during my early clubbing days. I was offered a line in the bathrooms of a seedy Kings Cross nightclub.

I'd heard of K before, that it was a horse tranquiliser! I was already pretty loaded at the time, I'd had ecstasy and some speed that night, but I love mixing different drugs — it's like a harmony of connected events, feelings and emotions that become part of the same experience. Needless to say, I jumped at the chance.

I barely made it back to my mates before I started to wobble — my legs became really heavy and I struggled to walk or stand up without holding onto the railing. Everything slowed down, I could hear people talking to me, but I couldn't respond. Words came out, but I could tell by their look of confusion and amusement that I was talking gibberish. I sat down and felt like I was sinking into the lounge. I was observing my surroundings — the lights, sounds, the people dancing. It was like seeing, hearing and interpreting things from a whole

“ I have learned a few things that have helped to reduce the risk for me, so I can enjoy the experience more.

new perspective.

All up, I discovered what a dissociative drug does! I was separated from reality as I knew it. I was on the outside looking in, just an observer to my life.

Over the years I continued to use K with other drugs, but it wasn't until I tried it on its own through an IM injection that my love affair with K began.

For me, being on ketamine feels like I am on a spiritual journey that alters my concept of time, space, mind and body. I feel elevated from my surroundings, like I am observing my environment through a different lens. Lights, colours and shapes seem to intertwine and evolve in sync with the music. The experience feels profound and enlightening to me — almost like it broadens my understanding of myself and life.

However, journeying through a K-hole is not for everyone.

Many of my friends refuse to take it

after having a bad experience. Feeling detached from your body and surroundings can be overwhelming and give you a sense of loss of control. Changes in perception of sights and sounds can be disorienting and confusing. Some people feel overwhelmed rather than enlightened. In particular, it can be triggering for some people whose mental health issues challenge their sense of reality.

I have learned a few things that have helped to reduce the risk for me, so I can enjoy the experience more. Like if you've mixed K with other drugs, the effects can be magnified — so make sure you always have a buddy with you and keep tabs on what drugs and how much you've taken. Practicing safe hygiene can also reduce potential harms. Clean surfaces, use fresh equipment and dispose of that equipment responsibly. Most importantly, look after yourself and your mates. ■

## IS KETAMINE KNOWN BY OTHER NAMES?

**Yes!, Other names include:**  
K, Special K, Ketta, Vitamin K, Ket, Horse Tranquiliser, Kit kat



### What kind of drug is Ketamine?

Ketamine is from a group of drugs called dissociatives. Dissociatives are a class of psychedelic drug. Other dissociative drugs are nitrous oxide (nangs) and PCP (angeldust).

### What does 'dissociative' mean?

'Dissociative' means detached or separated from reality. Dissociative drugs can produce distortions in the way your senses work — especially your seeing and hearing. They can make you feel apart from the world and distanced from yourself. You might get a sense of floating and disconnection, like a visitor to your life.

### What is the medical use for Ketamine?

Ketamine is used as an anaesthetic in surgery and veterinary medicine. Its value is in its ability to provide analgesia (pain relief) along with amnesia (memory loss) to reduce trauma. There is also significant evidence associated with its effectiveness as an antidepressant, rapidly reducing suicidal feelings and anxiety; and as therapy for Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder.

### What does it mean to go into a K-hole?

It's a state of total separation from reality and sense of physical self into an hallucinogenic state that distorts the senses and is completely absorbing.

### How do I reduce the risks?

Dose and setting can play a big part in how individuals experience dissociatives. Like other drugs with hallucinogenic properties, some people find them insightful and joyful while others become distressed and fearful. Like every experience on the planet, it's horses for courses. If you have had a past bad experience with any drug because of a change in your sense of reality, consider avoiding ketamine. Regardless, all first-time users of a new drug should use a very small amount. All users should buy from a trusted source only, do it with someone they trust and have a realistic plan for getting help if they become distressed, become unwell or overdose. **More over the page!**

# KETAMINE.



## Dose, Risks and Safer Using Tips

### Risks

- You can overdose fatally from an excessive amount of ketamine. Know your tolerance and reduce your dose with new gear.
- The risk of fatal overdose increases significantly if you mix ketamine with alcohol, GHB, opioids or benzos.
- Symptoms of overdose include excessive saliva, rapid eye movement, dilated (large) pupils, abdominal pain, nausea, vomiting, problems urinating — could be peeing without warning or difficulty peeing or needing to pee too often, heart palpitations / chest pain, muscle rigidity, loss of consciousness, difficulty breathing and respiratory failure.
- You could seriously/permanently damage your bladder if you use ketamine when you have a urinary tract infection.

### Dose

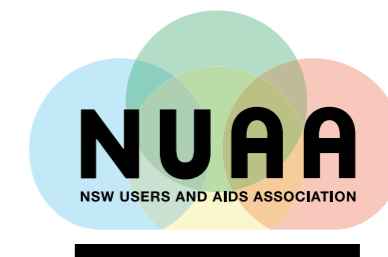
- How much you take depends a lot on how you take it. You should be thinking at the lowest levels for injecting intravenously and slightly higher for intramuscular or subcutaneous injecting. If snorting ketamine or taking it orally, you may be able to tolerate a higher amount.
- It's important to work out dosing and method before you've had any drugs or alcohol, and stick to your plan. Always start low and go slow if trying something new, and always do your own research first.
- Although the effect with injecting is immediate, it can take 15–20 minutes to fully take effect if you snort it. It's best to wait at least that long before redosing. Applying ketamine to a place with lots of capillaries, like under your tongue or in your anus will come on faster than snorting.
- Even though the apparent effects wear off after 2 hours, the drug still is active in our system for 3 hours.
- Unlike most drugs, ketamine does 'stack' — that is, redosing will keep building on the effect. Beware that redosing too soon or too much can cause a stronger than expected reaction to the drug — AKA an overdose.
- Like most drugs, you will build a tolerance to ketamine the more you use it.

### Duration (of Effects)

- Timing depends on how you take it.
- Total Duration: 1–2 hours (note that while the felt effects may last around 2hrs, ket is still active in your system for around 3hrs. It's worth remembering if you intend to redose at some point.
- Onset: 0–15 minutes – injecting IV is instant, up to 15 mins for snorting or oral us.
- Peak: Straight away if injected, otherwise 20–60 minutes.
- Coming Down: 30–60 minutes.
- Hang-over / after-effects: 1–3 hours.

### Safer Using Tips

- Know what you're taking. Like all drugs, ketamine can be cut with other substances that can affect its potency. Drug-testing kits can confirm what's in your bag.
- Start with a low dose. You can't predict the potency or what other substances might have been added. If your first dose doesn't have much effect, wait at least 20 mins before having a top up.
- Ketamine significantly impacts your balance and coordination. Remain seated or lying down, particularly when using larger doses.
- Be mindful of potential loss of coordination / balance. Having a comfy place to sit or lay is great, especially if using larger doses. Depending on the potency, dose and other substances you have taken, it is possible you may have difficulty moving or communicating for a period of time. Also, remember the recovery position — it's the safest position to be in.
- Tell your mates what you're doing. Make sure you have people around you that know what you've had, can provide support and seek medical assistance, if required. Use with people you trust. They can support you if you lose coordination, go into a K-hole or lose consciousness.
- As always, practice safe hygiene to avoid infections. Swab or wash your hands and other skin that may come in contact during the drug process. If injecting, use sterile equipment, don't share with anyone else — even lovers — and dispose of used gear responsibly. When snorting, clean surfaces with something sterile, swab your k-spoon (tiny spoons used for ketamine) or use a new/sterilised snorting device.
- For snorters: If you're experiencing a burning sensation after snorting, rinse your nose with water or do a saline nasal rinse before/after racking to prevent damaging the protective lining in your nose. Also really helps ease the post-ket sneeze-marathons.
- For people taking it orally: ketamine is not absorbed by the stomach and goes directly to the liver. This can increase the hallucinogenic effects of the drug. Whether this is a negative or positive is up to you, but it's worth being aware of it.
- Keep your fluids up — people in a K-hole can forget — and if things feel a little too much, grounding yourself with a potassium-rich banana can help.
- Be careful mixing ketamine with other drugs, particularly alcohol, opioids and other depressants.
- Take care of yourself and others. If you (or someone you know) has a bad reaction, seek medical assistance.





# Shafting

**There are lots of ways of taking drugs, and regardless of what some think, injecting isn't the only way or even always the best way of taking drugs. The reality is that injecting goes hand in hand with risk from blood borne viruses like hep C, hep B and HIV; abscesses; vein damage; bacterial infections (dirty hits); cellulitis; and endocarditis.**

Putting drugs in places where there are lots of capillaries, like under the tongue, in the vagina or in the anus, can bring drugs on nearly as fast as injecting, and they can last longer. Dale takes us through his experimentation with taking a variety of different drugs via the butt.

I've always loved learning and experimenting, to the point where sometimes I feel like a bit of a mad scientist. Since the age of 15 when I read on the internet about a strange substance called 'weed' I've been fascinated with, and by, drugs. At my last count I'd tried 32 different 'illicit' drugs. But while trying these strange, stigmatised substances has been an ongoing passion project, I've found another avenue to further satiate this curiosity.

Boofing, booty bumping, shelving, plugging. Many names, one concept — taking drugs via ya bum. So, while I've tried 32 drugs so far, I've only ass-essed 9 through this

portal of pleasure. As a rectal researcher I want to share some of my findings in the hope of penetrating a new frontier in drug knowledge.

I've experienced a lot of incredible things, but also learnt some serious lessons. Whatever you choose to do with your bum, research the shit out of it first! Without further ado, here's my review of 4 substances I've boofed. I have included a rectal rating, which is a rating of how rectal administration compares to usual methods. Knowledge is power! ■

Putting drugs inside the anus (or vagina) is also known as booty bumping, shafting, shelving and boofing.

## MDMA

**Difficulty rating: 1/10**  
**Rectal Rating: 10/10**

**How:** Lubing up a dose and pushing it in up to your second knuckle.

**Review:** Hands (or pants) down this is the best way of taking MDMA. Hits harder and faster, feels better and is just simply: great. A must try.

**Watch out for:** Taking too much — you need less for the same effect this way. It's much more bioavailable when taken up the bum, so, start lower than your usual dose, maybe half for starters.

## CANNABIS

**Difficulty rating: 8/10**  
**Rectal Rating: 6/10**

**How:** (Don't do this, it's just what I did) I tried this by decarbing (cooking) a nug (nugget/bud) of weed, covering it in lube and pushing it up there. Future recommendation would be to use weed butter instead of a bud itself.

**Review:** Admittedly my method was poor—it wasn't great. Crunchy, uncomfortable, and difficult. Did get very high though!

**Watch out for:** Getting way too high. I ended up curled up under a blanket for 4 hours, so use caution. If you do get too high, just ride it out, drink a tea and chill out with a movie — it will pass. I suspect a weed butter enema would work and work very potently.

## GHB

**Difficulty rating: 7/10**  
**Rectal rating: 8/10 (with caution)**

**How:** Measuring a smaller dose than normal, diluting it 2:1 or 3:1 with saline solution, lubricating a 3ml barrel and inserting.

**Review:** Faster onset, with more intensity. High is great but there are some serious risks. Plus, it can burn a lot.

**Watch out for:** GBL! A lot of the 'G' in Australia is GBL, an industrial solvent. This will burn the shit out of you. That can cause permanent damage. Which is a serious pain in the arse. GBL usually smells and tastes like nasty bitter chemicals (whereas GHB should be slightly salty and/or licoricey.) If it smells like chemicals, don't risk your poor bum with it!

Also, it's easy to overdo it on G, and boofing it makes it hit much stronger, so you have to take a lot less — at least 30% less than your usual dose, start small! Also: dilute it in water 3:1 to further reduce bum burn.

*[From the Editor: We strongly recommend that you do NOT shaft G — it will burn and may cause scarring.]*

## NANGS

**Difficulty rating: 10/10**  
**Rectal rating: 2/10**  
**Entertainment value: 11/10**

**How:** Filling a balloon with your nang, twisting it round your finger, lubing it up, carefully inserting (while holding the balloon closed). Then carefully releasing the end of the balloon while holding it in place. It's not easy. Don't even think about doing it from the canister unless you want to blow a hole in your insides. My research has taught me that your bum is a sensitive and important place and a nanginator could truly rip your insides apart. Use a balloon.

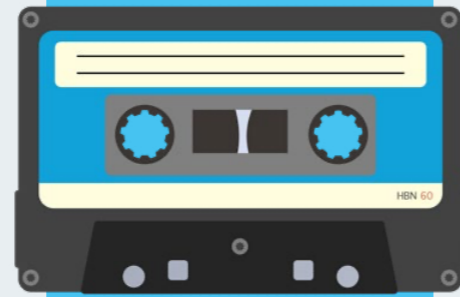
**Review:** Great party trick, pretty much useless otherwise. Is quite cold internally.

**Watch out for:** The canister. Don't be tempted to take the seemingly easy route and go straight from the canister. That pressure could seriously damage you.

**I've experienced a lot of incredible things, but also learnt some serious lessons. Whatever you choose to do with your bum, research the shit out of it first!**

# ROCK & ROLL Handwashing

Washing your hands is a simple, quick and effective way to protect against the spread of bacteria, blood and mucus. This helps you avoid infections, COVID-19 and hepatitis.



It's important to wash your hands for at least 20 seconds. Here are some songs with choruses just the right length so you can rock out while you wash those worries away!

<b>'Jolene'</b> by Dolly Parton	<b>'I Want it That Way'</b> by Backstreet Boys
<b>'Stayin Alive'</b> by the Bee Gees	<b>'Bye Bye Bye'</b> by NSYNC
<b>'Karma Chameleon'</b> by Culture Club	<b>'Mr Brightside'</b> by The Killers
<b>'Toxic'</b> by Britney Spears	<b>'Ironic'</b> by Alanis Morissette
<b>'No Scrubs'</b> by TLC	<b>'Raspberry Beret'</b> by Prince
<b>'I'm Still Standing'</b> by Elton John	<b>'Believe'</b> by Cher

<b>'Take on me'</b> by A-ha	<b>'Circles'</b> by Post Malone
<b>'Living on a Prayer'</b> by Bon Jovi	<b>'Africa'</b> by ToTo
<b>'Kung Fu Fighting'</b> by Carl Douglas	<b>'Hollaback Girl'</b> by Gwen Stefani
<b>'Shake it Off'</b> by Taylor Swift	Frozen's <b>'Let it Go'</b>
<b>'Landslide'</b> by Fleetwood Mac	<b>'Lose Yourself'</b> by Eminem
<b>'Love Shack'</b> by The B-52's	<b>'Ms Jackson'</b> by OutKast
<b>'Since U Been Gone'</b> by Kelly Clarkson	<b>'Old Town Road'</b> by Lil Nas X
<b>'The Gambler'</b> by Kenny Rogers	<b>'Mambo No. 5'</b> by Lou Bega

## RUBY AND TYLER TALK

# KRONIC

### HOW ABOUT THOSE SYNTHETIC CANNABINOIDS?

#### Ruby's Story

It was about 10 years ago when I first tried 'synthetic cannabis', when it was all the rage — legal (ish) and readily available at your local tobacconist for a very reasonable price.

It was marketed as a safe, natural, legal high made from herbs and plant extracts. I had my reservations — a few friends had tried it with very mixed reviews. Some loved it, describing their experience as like being a kid again. Some said it made them fall straight asleep. Others hated it, saying it was the scariest, most intense and unenjoyable 15 minutes of their lives. But I was prepared to give it a go.

A mate and I bought a bag from a tobacconist. After smoking a cone mixed with a bit of tobacco, it didn't seem that bad. After a minute or so I felt good — light headed, very giggly, hot flushes and a bit warm and fuzzy

inside. We decided to go to a local bar and have a drink. It was about a 10 minute walk away. No sooner had we entered the bar than it hit me like a tonne of bricks. My stomach started churning, my vision blurred and everything went white. The need to vomit came hard and fast.

I barely made it out the door before spraying the pavement, parked cars and whatever else got in my way. I should also add that this happened on a busy street in broad daylight, so you can imagine my horror and embarrassment from the looks I was getting. I managed to crawl to the gutter where I sat between 2 parked cars clutching at my knees in a tight ball, shaking profusely and hyperventilating.

I don't know how long I sat there for, but it felt like an eternity. The entire time I was overcome with an impending sense of doom — like

something terrible was about to happen.

Then the effects began to wear off. My vision returned and I was no longer convinced the world was about to end. My breathing started to return to normal.

My friend sat by me and gave me a bottle of water and some lollies. We went back to his place for a debrief and some trauma counselling! Even an hour after consuming it I still felt quite anxious, agitated and had chest pains.

I've since drawn the conclusion that nothing beats the real thing. Especially in the context of natural weed vs synthetics.

#### Tyler's Story

Even though 'synthetic cannabis' is no longer legal and easily available, it is still around and generally referred to as 'kronic'.

I can only speak to my own experience but I loved the stuff once I learned how to use it.

The big thing to remember is that it's not pot and it's probably dangerous or misleading to market it as an alternative to pot. I feel that the name 'synthetic cannabis' is totally

misleading. This is a very powerful drug in its own right. I only ever had a problem with it when I treated it like pot and smoked it straight ... I almost fell over in a supermarket because it is very strong!

Too much is easy to do. One way to cut it back could be cutting with spin (tobacco, sage, lavender, rosemary, tea - whatever) at about 1 x chronic to 2 x spin.

I built up a tolerance very quickly as I have with most drugs, which is probably normal. One mistake I made once was to forget exactly how strong it was in a social situation, especially with people who don't usually smoke it. I passed it around and everyone got too stoned to be very social!

In situations like that, it's good to know that it doesn't last for long. It's one of those things like K or coke. Takes you very high, very quickly and then you start to come down. It is certainly a lot more intense than pot — dreamy and trippy — but doesn't last for long.

My biggest message is that it could be a very scary drug if not used properly. My advice is to respect it as a drug that can be very powerful. Remember: a little goes a long way. ■

## WHAT IS KRONIC?

Synthetic cannabinoid products generally are a non-psychoactive herb sprayed with lab-produced chemicals and have been sold under hundreds of brand names.

In Australia the most popular names are 'Kronic', 'K2', 'Kaos' and 'Spice'. 'Kronic' is not to be confused with 'chronic' which usually refers to very strong hydro-grown cannabis. The term 'synthetic cannabis' is misleading. While, like THC (the main psychoactive component in cannabis), this drug acts on various cannabinoid receptors in the brain, it is not a natural product and is sprayed on plant matter. It is man-made with different chemicals and the effect is very different.

These drugs initially made an appearance as 'legal highs' although in most jurisdictions they did not remain legal for long. The rapid spread of different synthetic cannabinoids has in part been driven by manufacturers producing new chemicals in response to law-makers banning existing ones.

In NSW, a 2013 law banned whole classes of chemicals, thereby criminalising drugs before they have even been invented, which means any form of chronic can be assumed to be illegal in NSW.

While some people have a preference for kronic, it is often used as a substitute for marijuana because it is cheaper and drug tests don't detect it. But these substances are different drugs than plant-based cannabis and have more risks.

It's important to reduce the risks involved in people using 'kronic' as if it were cannabis rather than treating it as a different drug.

Criminalisation has contributed to this and has been counterproductive to harm reduction. Accurate labelling and product consistency would contribute greatly to harm reduction. Other harm reduction measures would include comprehensive drug education about emerging substances.

“

**It's not pot and it's probably dangerous or misleading to market it as an alternative to pot. It's a very powerful drug in its own right.**

We asked 4 people in their 20s why they choose to vape instead of smoke cannabis.

# VAPING CANNABIS?

Racie, Prismo, Jiro and Seb hash it out

## RACIE SAYS:

I used to smoke weed 24/7 and I felt my use of weed was out of my control. I was dependent on the hit of punching a cone. I had previously tried to cut down by only smoking joints, but it didn't satisfy me.

So a few years ago, I decided to try vaping weed. It really worked for me.

To start with, the effect was much stronger than a bong so I was able to reduce the number of times I reached for weed every day.

It also felt gentler to my throat, like it wasn't causing as much damage to my lungs.

One thing that really surprised me was that using a vape helped me to separate my dependency on weed and my dependency on nicotine. When I vaped I didn't use spin.

I discovered that the reason I was having so many bongs was because I was craving nicotine not weed. Swapping to vaping has helped me cut down on how much weed I smoke and helped me realise that I was dependent on cigarettes. I don't smoke tobacco any more. It feels like vaping has really improved my health.

“

Using a vape helped me to separate my dependency on weed and my dependency on cigarettes/nicotine. When I vaped I didn't use spin. I discovered that the reason I was having so many bongs was because I was craving tobacco not weed.

## JIRO SAYS:

I see vaping as a healthier alternative. It allows me to vape just weed buds — and not put any spin [tobacco] in there at all. And I can steer away from the risks of combustion.

## PRISMO SAYS:

I prefer vaping cannabis because I feel like it gives me more control over the experience and how I feel. I can dial the temperature down earlier in the day or times I want a lighter effect or go up to the safest top level — just under 200 — for a stronger effect.

The main benefit I get from vaping is that it is safer than smoking. I haven't been a long-term smoker, but health-wise I am sure it will be better for me in the long run. The leftover AVB (already vaped bud!) can be saved and used in edibles, which are healthier for my respiratory system, so that's a nice little bonus.

Another benefit is that vapes are a bit more discreet, and they're great for when it's windy!

The thing to remember is that you don't need a high-end vape straight away. Vaping isn't for everyone. It's worthwhile to research the market to find one that fits your needs, rather than spending hundreds straight away.

## SEB SAYS:

When I have things to do the next day, I vape — I find I'm less sluggish the next day.

My vape has a temperature control and I can adjust the temperature to change the way the weed affects me. For real, it's like magic. Vaping weed at 200 degrees Celsius is my go-to. If I just want some chill medical effects I go low, like 180°C.

I either eat the post-vape buds or throw them in a Chai on the stove to make a delicious, intoxicating tea.

## THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN CANNABIS & MARIJUANA

### Why do we use the term 'cannabis' instead of 'marijuana' in *User's News*?

Because it's racist! Marijuana was used by prohibitionists, especially in America, to emphasise the drug's 'foreignness'. It was a way of using racism to make people scared of the drug.

The word comes from Mexican Spanish, perhaps from soldier's slang for a 'brothel' — 'Maria y Juana' or from Nahuatl (Aztec) 'malihuan' meaning 'prisoner'. However, it's useful to note that cannabis isn't native to Mexico — it was actually introduced in the 1500s.

Nearly a century ago, US bureaucrat Harry Anslinger typified racist fears about the drug when he said: "There are 100,000 total marijuana smokers in the US, and most are Negroes, Hispanics, Filipinos and entertainers. Their Satanic music, jazz and swing, result from marijuana use. This marijuana causes white women to seek sexual relations with Negroes, entertainers and many others".

Now more than 55 million people in the US use cannabis. Some US states have legalised cannabis for medical or recreational use; however, the term 'marijuana' is still used — and is still about the 'other', not the mainstream. 'Marijuana' is a term and an idea that we need to let go of — and replace it with one we associate with holistic, herbal medicine: 'cannabis'. ■



# Dr Liam's LOW-DOWN

## REDUCING THE HARMS AROUND CANNABIS CONCENTRATES AND VAPING

UN interviews Dr Liam Engel, Adjunct Research Fellow, School of Medical and Health Sciences, Edith Cowan University about the finer points of new wave cannabis use. The more you know, the better you can manage the risks.

**UN: Welcome to User's News, Liam. Can you tell us a bit about yourself?**

**LE:** I'm an illicit drug researcher seeking to empower drug environments and the people that inhabit them. My areas of expertise are around harm reduction, plants and fungi. I first got involved with NUAA through DanceWize NSW.

**UN: Awesome! Thanks for sharing your experience! So let's get to it... What are cannabis concentrates, Liam?**

**LE:** Cannabis concentrates are made from the resin of cannabis plants. Cannabis resin is a sticky substance that oozes out of small hairs (trichomes) on cannabis.

Different concentrates use different techniques and solvents to collect cannabis resin. Check out the glossary (next page) for an overview of some of the main kinds of concentrates. The glossary also

explains some of the complicated terms we use to describe the processes involved in making and vaping cannabis concentrates.

**UN: Why do people make cannabis concentrates?**

**LE:** It's a way of separating out the sticky cannabis resin from the rest of the plant. With cannabis concentrates, you are only inhaling the stuff that gets you high. Cannabis concentrates are a much stronger drug by weight than cannabis buds or flowers.

**UN: Can you overdose on concentrates and, if so, what are the symptoms?**

**LE:** It is easy to overdose on cannabis concentrates — especially when eating them! Cannabis overdose can affect your mind and emotions — creating effects like panic attacks and anxiety. There is not the same risk of death as with opioids, for example,

but cannabis overdose can affect you physically. You may have heard people talking about their body feeling heavy or not being able to move.

**UN: So, if eating has a risk of overdose, why do it?**

**LE:** Eating cannabis concentrate causes less harm to your airways than inhaling a concentrate via vaping or smoking. You can manage the risk of overdose by knowing your tolerance and being careful with measurements. It is safer to start with a low dose when eating, let the cannabis settle in over two hours or so, then top up later.

**UN: What other risks are there and how do we avoid them?**

**LE:** There is a risk around unwanted plant material, solvents and other impurities in your concentrate — ideally, the only thing you want in your concentrate is what's

getting you high — the cannabis resin. You don't want to vape or eat chemicals used in the process of making the concentrates. Sometimes solvents and other harmful impurities don't get removed in this process.

Some impurities like plant dust aren't so bad, but impurities like hydrocarbons are a particularly unhealthy extra. Hydrocarbons are more likely to be in concentrates made with butane (BHO).

**UN: Okay, if BHO is one to watch out for, are there less harmful concentrates?**

**LE:** Bubble hash and rosin are likely the less harmful black market concentrates, because these concentrates only add water and heat.

**UN: Is there a way to tell by sight if something has harmful additives?**

**LE:** Light-coloured concentrates may indicate purity and are likely to be less harmful than dark-coloured concentrates. Pure cannabis resin is typically a light amber colour.

There are a couple of exceptions — chocolate hash is darker because it contains plant material, dirt and dead skin. RSO is darker because ethanol can extract chlorophyll, giving some RSO a green tinge.

**UN: That's really helpful! Any other tips about additives?**

**LE:** In some manufacturing processes, cannabis resin can be extracted or combined with solvents that don't evaporate, like vegetable oil. And sometimes concentrates are dissolved and diluted in fatty foods, like butter.

Smoking or vaping 'cannabis oils' that have been diluted in fat can cause respiratory (breathing) problems.

These diluted oils are meant to be eaten or applied to skin. Vaped concentrates using diluents like vitamin E have caused lipoid pneumonia, a form of lung inflammation resulting from fat particles in the lungs.

**UN: This stuff requires quite a bit of knowledge — and I did not take biology or chemistry at school. How do we know how something is made?**

**LE:** Ask your dealer how the concentrate was made and what solvent it was made with, particularly for concentrates you plan to vape. If your dealer doesn't know, try and shop around 'til you find a dealer that can give you this information. If you can't find another dealer, it is probably safer to avoid their concentrates.

## Glossary of Cannabis Concentrates

Not familiar with the types of cannabis concentrates? These are some of the more common types:

- Chocolate hash is resin that sticks to people's hands or equipment
- Kief is sifted resin, trichomes and other plant dust
- Bubble hash is ice or water separated resin
- Rosin is heat and pressure separated resin
- Butane hash oil (BHO) is butane extracted resin
- Rick Simpson's oil (RSO) is ethanol extracted resin
- Cannabis e-juice is concentrate dissolved in e-juice

**UN: A lot of people I've talked to have started vaping their cannabis. What is that all about?**

**LE:** You're right, vaping is getting more and more popular for cannabis. Vaping works by heating a substance to its boiling temperature so it evaporates but doesn't burn.

In comparison, smoking works by heating a substance beyond boiling temperature, so that the substance catches fire (combustion).

Both smoking and vaping produce a similar high. However, smoking involves the inhalation of extra smoke that produces little effect, on top of the vapour which produces the effect you want.

**UN: Can you give us any good tips for safer vaping?**

**LE:** Many vaporisers have temperature controls and it is important to use these controls to reduce your vape temperature as much as possible. Cancer-causing benzene is released in large quantities at temperatures equal to or higher than 200°C. The lower your vaping temperature, the less extra, unwanted fumes you inhale on top of the vapour from your substance.

**UN: We've also been hearing about different types of vaporisers. What are they about?**

**LE:** There are many different types of vaporisers that can be used to vape cannabis plant material, cannabis concentrates and other substances, too. Vaporisers work by using electricity or a flame to heat a substance. Vaporisers are a lot gentler on the throat than smoking,

“It's also important to accurately control your vaping temperature. This helps prevent the chemical benzene from being released, which occurs at temperatures higher than 200°C.”

meaning those harsh coughing sessions some people have when smoking cannabis are less likely.

Some of the common types of vaporisers are:

- e-cigarettes use a wick to absorb e-juice, which is heated by a metal coil that runs around the wick.
- tank e-cigarettes store e-juice in a tank.
- drip e-cigarettes need e-juice to be dripped onto a wick by hand.
- dabbing involves heating a surface and placing cannabis concentrates on the hot surface.
- dry herb vaporisers vaporise plant material, like cannabis or tobacco.

**UN: What is the best way to reduce risks involved with vaporisers?**

**LE:** You can make your vaporiser safer by cleaning away residual gunk from previous use — the less stuff you heat and inhale, the better. If you want to get high, just inhale the stuff that gets you high, nothing else!

It's also important to accurately control your vaping temperature. This helps prevent the chemical

benzene from being released, which occurs at temperatures higher than 200°C. Flame-powered vaporisers do not control or measure temperature as accurately as electric vaporisers, so you will tend to overheat and inhale more benzene with flame vaporisers. If you use a flame vaporiser, aim to underheat rather than overheat.

**UN: What is e-juice?**

**LE:** e-liquid, e-juice or vape juice is used inside e-cigarettes and vapes.

e-juice normally contains propylene glycol (PG), vegetable glycerin (VG) and a psychoactive substance, normally nicotine, but it can contain cannabis concentrates, amphetamines, opioids, and other substances too. e-juice may also contain flavours and mixing agents.

PG and VG are both colourless liquids that produce vapour when heated. They are considered safe for human consumption and are commonly used as food additives.

PG is harsher on the throat but has less taste and leaves less residue than VG. VG is smoother, sweeter and produces larger clouds of vapour than PG, but is more likely to leave gunk in your vaporiser.

**UN: We've heard that vaping e-juice with nicotine is considered a harm reduction approach to tobacco or nicotine smoking. That sounds intuitive, but is there evidence?**

**LE:** It is considered very likely that vaping e-juice is less harmful than smoking, but the long-term health risks are unknown, because vaping is so new and there isn't

much research yet. Lots of people say that vaping nicotine e-juice has helped them stop smoking cigarettes and reduced their throat and lung irritation.

**UN: Can you use e-juice with cannabis concentrates?**

**LE:** Cannabis concentrates do not dissolve easily in e-juice without mixing agents, although they do dissolve better in PG than VG.

**UN: How about the relative safety?**

**LE:** Eating a psychoactive substance is normally less harmful than vaping e-juice.

Vaping a psychoactive substance straight is likely less harmful than vaping the substance mixed in e-juice.

The fewer added flavours and mixing agents an e-juice has, the less harmful it will probably be.

e-juice made in a country with manufacturing standards, like New Zealand, England and Canada and made according to their standards, should be less harmful.

The e-juice that causes less harm to your respiratory system is a strong e-juice, because you inhale less e-juice vapour to get high. However, a strong e-juice carries the risk of overdose, increased tolerance and respiratory irritation.

**UN: Thanks a lot, Liam — I hope you will talk to us again for UN!**

**LE:** My pleasure, I'm sure you and I could happily talk about drugs forever. NUAA does important work and I am proud to support it

Peer-lead drug services are the gold standard. ■

## A CHEMISTRY LESSON

**Benzene:** A liquid or vapour consisting mainly of the lighter and more volatile hydrocarbons of petroleum or kerosene oil, used as a solvent and for cleaning.

**Butane:** A common fuel used in cigarette lighters.

**Combustion:** Also known as burning, is a chemical reaction creating smoke and fire.

**Diluents:** Something used to dilute something — like water when added to cordial.

**Evaporate:** When heat turns something into a gas or vapour.

**Hydrocarbon:** The principal constituents of petroleum and natural gas. Made up of the elements carbon and hydrogen. Hydrocarbons are harmful to inhale.

**Lipoid pneumonia:** A rare disease that occurs when oil or fat enters the lungs. Lipoid means relating to fat. Symptoms are a cough, high fever and shortness of breath.

**Propylene glycol (PG):** A synthetic, colourless, odourless, tasteless liquid that is used as a food additive for maintaining moisture and flavour quality. Used in e-liquid to provide a 'throat hit' to make vaping feel more like smoking.

**Psychoactive substances:** Chemicals (natural or synthetic) that cause changes in mood, awareness, thoughts, feelings, or behaviour. Put simply, it's the pure part of a drug that gets you high.

**Respiratory system:** The network of organs and tissues that help you breathe in oxygen and move it round your body plus clean out waste gases like carbon dioxide. Includes your airways, lungs and blood vessels, as well as the muscles that power your lungs.

**Solvent:** A substance that dissolves or extracts. Common solvents are water and alcohol.

**Trichomes:** Small hairs on plants.

**Vegetable glycerin (VG):** A natural chemical, derived from vegetable oils, used as a thickening agent in foods. Used in e-liquid to make bigger vapour clouds.

# Looking For Treatment?

## Advice about treatment, changing your use and other support

ADIS (Alcohol & Drug Information Service):	1800 422 599 (24HRS, 7 DAYS)
Family Drug Support:	1300 368 186 (24HRS, 7 DAYS)
NSW Users & AIDS Association (NUAA) :	1800 644 413 (Mon-Fri, 9 AM - 6 PM)
Opioid Treatment Line (OTL):	1800 642 428 (Mon-Fri, 9:30AM - 5 PM)
Stimulant Treatment Line:	1800 101 188 (24 HRS, 7 DAYS)
Youth Drugs & Alcohol Advice (YoDAA):	1800 458 685 (24 HRS, 7 DAYS)

## Local Health District Drug and Alcohol Intake Lines

Want to find out about the local public services? Ask about detox services, counseling and OTP through these intake lines.

Central Coast	<b>02 4394 4880</b>
Illawarra Shoalhaven	<b>1300 652 226</b>
Nepean Blue Mountains	<b>1300 661 050</b> (24/7 service)
Northern Sydney	<b>1300 889 788</b>
South Eastern Sydney	<b>(02) 9332 8777</b> (Northern) <b>(02) 9113 2944</b> (Central)
South Western Sydney	<b>(02) 9616 8586</b>
Sydney	<b>(02) 9515 6311</b>
Western Sydney	<b>(02) 9840 3355</b>
Far West	<b>1300 662 263</b>
Hunter New England	<b>1300 660 059</b>
Mid North Coast	<b>1300 662 263</b>
Murrumbidgee	<b>1800 800 944</b>
Northern NSW	<b>(02) 6620 7600; (07) 55067010</b> (Tweed Heads); <b>(02) 6620 7600</b> (Lismore)
Southern NSW	<b>1800 809 423</b>
Western NSW	<b>1300 887 000</b>

# WHERE TO SCORE FITS

These are only some of the NSP outlets in NSW. If you can't contact them through the number listed, or if you don't know where the nearest NSP is in your area, ring ADIS on (02) 9361 8000 or 1800 422 599

**Key to Available Services**    CL - Clinic/Nurse    C - Hep C Treatment/Testing    O - Outreach  
D - Dispensing Machine    N - Naloxone training

Location	Phone No.	CL	D	C	N	O
Albury	6058 1800	x	✓	✓	x	x
Armidale (Inverell/Tamworth)	0427 851 011	✓	x	x	x	x
Auburn Community Health	8759 4000	x	✓	x	x	x
Ballina	6620 6105	x	✓	x	x	✓
Bankstown	9780 2777	x	x	x	x	x
Bathurst	6330 5850	x	✓	✓	x	x
Bega	6492 9620	✓	x	✓	x	x
Blacktown	9831 4037	✓	✓	✓	x	✓
Bowral Community Health	4861 8000	x	✓	x	x	x
Brookvale	9388 5110	x	✓	✓	✓	✓
Byron Bay	6639 9675	x	✓	x	x	✓
Campbelltown, Liverpool, Camden Hospital ED	8738 6650	x	✓	✓	x	x
Canterbury HARM	9718 2636	x	x	✓	✓	x
Cooma	6455 3201	✓	✓	x	x	x
Dubbo	6841 2489	x	✓	✓	x	x
Gosford	4320 2753	x	✓	✓	x	✓
Goulburn S East	4827 3913	✓	✓	✓	x	x
Grafton	6641 8712	✓	✓	✓	x	✓
Hornsby	9477 9530	x	✓	x	x	x
Ingleburn Community Health	4782 2133	x	x	x	x	x
Katoomba / Blue Mountains	4782 2133	x	✓	x	x	x
Kings Cross KRC	9360 2766	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Lismore HARM	6622 2222	x	✓	x	x	✓
Liverpool	8738 6650	x	✓	x	x	x
Marrickville HARM	9562 0434	x	✓	x	x	x
Moree	6757 0000	x	✓	x	x	x

Location	Phone No.	CL	D	C	N	O
Moruya	4474 1561	✓	✓	x	x	x
Mt Druitt	9881 1334	✓	x	x	x	✓
Murwillumbah	6670 9400	x	✓	x	x	✓
Narellan Community Health	4640 3500	x	x	x	x	x
Narooma	4476 2344	✓	x	✓	x	x
Newcastle Harm Min Prgm	4016 4519	✓	x	x	x	x
Nimbin	6689 1500	x	✓	x	x	✓
Orange	6392 8600	✓	✓	✓	x	x
Parramatta	9687 5326	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Penrith/St Marys	4734 3996	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Port Macquarie	6588 2915	✓	✓	✓	x	✓
Queanbeyan	6150 7150	✓	✓	✓	x	x
Redfern HARM	9395 0400	✓	✓	✓	✓	x
Rosemeadow Community Health	4633 4100	x	x	x	x	x
St George	9113 2944	x	✓	x	x	x
St Leonards	9462 9040	x	✓	x	x	✓
Surry Hills ACON	9462 9040	✓	x	✓	x	✓
Surry Hills NUAA	8354 7343	✓	✓	✓	✓	x
Sutherland	9522 1046	x	✓	✓	✓	x
Sydney Hospital	9382 7440	x	✓	✓	✓	x
Tahmoor	4683 6000	x	x	x	x	x
Taree	6592 9315	✓	✓	✓	x	x
Tweed Heads	07 5506 7504	x	✓	x	x	✓
Wagga Wagga	6938 6411	x	✓	✓	x	x
Windsor	4560 5714	x	✓	x	x	x
Wollongong/Port Kembla	4275 1529	x	x	✓	✓	✓
Yass	6226 3833	x	✓	x	x	x
Young	6382 8888	x	x	x	x	x

# PeerLine



**1800 644 413**

**A peer-run support line for people who use drugs in NSW**

We are community members - we speak your language and are here to talk, or just listen, about what is happening in your life.

We can provide non-judgmental and confidential information, advice, referrals and individual advocacy.

We're here to help you connect with community. We will support you to speak on your own behalf and in your own interests.

## **To chat with one of our friendly peers**

Call **1800 644 413** or email [peerline@nuaa.org.au](mailto:peerline@nuaa.org.au)

9am-5pm Monday to Friday

For more information visit  
[nuaa.org.au/peerline](http://nuaa.org.au/peerline)



PeerLine is run by the NSW Users and AIDS Association (NUAA). NUAA is a peer-run drug user organisation that strives to advance the rights, health and dignity of people who use drugs in NSW.