

DrugWipe® rapid drug tests: reliable evidence of methamphetamine

NEWSLETTER

May 2021



No more fatigue!?

Working mums, sportspeople, partygoers – all united in the wish to appear infinitely capable. Methamphetamine seems to grant that wish. A physical and mental high that can last for days displaces the subsequent low, the risky side effects and the long-term consequences.

Methamphetamine (crystal meth) is made in small basement labs which, in Europe, mainly used to be located in the Czech Republic. Its raw material is ephedrine/pseudoephedrine, which is extracted from readily available medicines. Recent studies suggest that production sites have expanded into the border areas of the Czech Republic's neighbours. Another recent development is increased production of the drug in the Netherlands. This is because Mexican cartels have arrived on the scene – the profit margins are just too tempting.

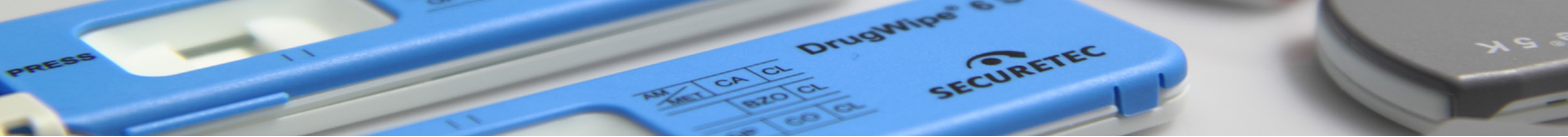
The substance mainly acts on the central nervous system by interfering with the cerebral metabolism. Primarily affected are the neurotransmitters serotonin and dopamine. Methamphetamine crosses the blood-brain barrier rapidly, but it takes far longer to degrade. Consequently, the effect on the consumer is usually relatively fast, and the buzz can last a very long time. An average dose generates a high of up to 16 hours. High doses may have an effect for up to 70 hours. But the side effects pack a punch too, and hangovers can last weeks.

Forms of methamphetamine consumption

Methamphetamine is usually provided in the form of small crystals, which is why it is known as crystal meth. The drug also comes as a fine, pale powder, and as tablets and capsules. What they all have in common is the fact that consumers do not know the methamphetamine concentration or which diluents the substance contains. The actual quantity being consumed is very much a lottery.

Most consumers 'sniff' methamphetamine, i.e. they inhale it through the nose, like cocaine. But the drug may also be smoked, swallowed or injected into veins as a solution.





In general, methamphetamine generates a strong sense of euphoria, increases one's sense of self-worth and willingness to take risks, and produces a powerful urge to move around. At the same time, it suppresses hunger, thirst and one's sense of one's own body. This combination generates a "sense of invincibility". The drug is extremely addictive and the dose required for euphoria increases quickly.

The feeling of physical and mental strength produced by methamphetamine has smoothed its transition from being a party drug to everyday consumption by high achievers. Crystal meth is used by people from all social strata who feel unable to cope with the pressures around them. This includes shift workers, working mothers and business executives. These findings are underpinned by the relatively late age of those getting into it and consuming it. A new consumer group has formed in the emergent 'chemsex' scene. There, people meet to 'improve' their sex life, or to enjoy it to extremes, under the influence of chemical drugs.

Increased consumption

Sewage analyses by the European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction (EMCDDA) show that methamphetamine consumption has increased. These findings are further supported by emergency admission figures. Medical emergencies due to crystal meth are on the rise, and often end in fatality. A part is played

Methamphetamine – part of a large drug family

Methamphetamine is synthetically manufactured from substances in the phenylethylamine group. It is used in medicine and abused as a euphoria-inducing, stimulating narcotic, known also as methylamphetamine. In the drugs scene it is also referred to as crystal meth, meth, crystal, ice, yaba, perlik, piko, crank, speed and crystal.

Methamphetamine is part of the amphetamine group. That also includes MDMA, MDA and MDEA. On the black market these drugs are traded using the name ecstasy (XTC).

There is no country in which methamphetamine is openly for sale. Both selling and possessing without permission are treated as criminal offences.

here by the fact that doses are difficult to gauge and product purity is increasing. There are also consumers who have their usage under control and only use the drug in a calculated way. Under-reporting is very high. Methamphetamine is mainly pushed and sold via the dark web, and postal and delivery services.

Increased euphoria and agitation are high risk factors on the roads. Mobile, reliable saliva tests such as DrugWipe are sound tools for quickly identifying drivers who are under the influence of drugs.



Rapid drug tests to detect methamphetamine consumers: reliable detection with the DrugWipe saliva test. We shall be happy to answer any queries.

Securetec Detektions-Systeme AG

Lilienthalstrasse 7
85579 Neubiberg – Germany
T +49 89 203080-1651
F +49 89 203080-1652
info@securetec.net / www.securetec.net
© 2021 Securetec Detektions-Systeme AG
70560-EN-v01-2021-05-05
Image source: Securetec AG; Fotolia AdobeStock
dimasobko, 330683142; Gorodenkoff, 175840497.



References:
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- www.drugcom.de, BZgA (Federal Centre for Health Education), Cologne

The DrugWipe saliva test
on YouTube:



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