

By The Professionals At Evolve Indy

- 1. Home
- 2. Blog
- 3. How Addictive Is Methamphetamine? Impacts To Your Brain & Body

Methamphetamine (meth) is a drug that has led to widespread addiction problems in many places. The drug is a powder that is also sometimes made into pills or a clear rock (crystal meth). It is made in laboratories, both in large quantities and in smaller amounts, which is done using over-the-counter ingredients such as pseudoephedrine, a common cold medicine ingredient. Methamphetamine is a Schedule II drug, which means that it is only legally available through a single prescription, due to its highly addictive qualities. It's a stimulant that can have a range of effects, including mood, energy levels, and focus.

Meth may be swallowed, snorted, injected, or smoked. Smoking and injection result in a faster effect but it also doesn't last long, which can lead to people taking more of it.

How Methamphetamine Affects Your Brain

Drugs affect the way that your brain works and can have not just short-term but also long-term and permanent effects on your brain. The neurons in your brain are affected by drugs, influenced by chemicals called neurotransmitters. One example of a neurotransmitter is dopamine, which is a chemical released when we participate in enjoyable or pleasurable behaviors. Repeatedly using drugs such as meth affects how the dopamine system in the brain works. It can cause the person to find it difficult to find pleasure in everyday activities, leading them to continue taking drugs so that they can get a dopamine hit.

Taking methamphetamine may cause a high, but there is also an after-effect on the brain. After "crashing", the person can then feel down for days or even longer. They will also feel a craving to take the drug again so that they can try to lift their mood again.

Methamphetamine Effects on the Body

As well as affecting the brain, meth has an effect on the body. There are both short-term effects from taking the drug and long-term effects that can result from taking it repeatedly and addiction. In the short term, some of the effects can include having a lot of energy, a fast heart rate, high blood pressure, high temperature, and feeling a sense of euphoria.

Long-term, taking meth can have a variety of effects on the body, even after the person is no longer taking it. These can include mental and emotional problems, including addiction, mood swings, anxiety, paranoia, psychosis, and problems with memory, controlling emotions, and thinking. Other symptoms can include problems sleeping, dental problems, violent behavior, skin sores, and more.

It is also possible for methamphetamine use to lead to death. One of the things that meth can do is raise your body temperature. If your temperature is high enough that you pass out and don't receive treatment right away, it can cause death. Methamphetamine use can also lead to cardiac events such as heart attacks and strokes due to increased heart rate and blood pressure, and constricted blood vessels.

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Navigation

- Home
- About
- Treatment
- Tour Facility
- Admissions
- Blog
- Contact

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