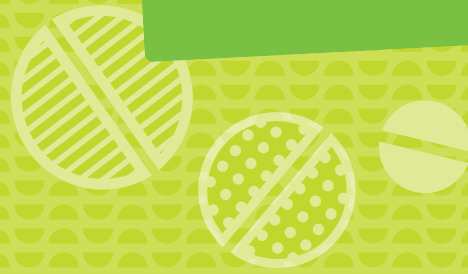




# Ecstasy



**Ecstasy AKA E, ex, E and C, eccy, MDMA, adam, XTC, love drug, eggs, pills**

## What is it?

Ecstasy is a drug called MDMA; it is like amphetamines. There is no control over the ingredients or quality of ecstasy so what you are sold as ecstasy is probably a mix of a range of drugs. This means that you have a much higher risk of overdosing, being poisoned or having other bad reactions when you use ecstasy.

**Ecstasy is an illegal drug, so you can be charged for possessing, making or selling it.**



There is no "safe way" to use ecstasy, however, if you are choosing to use, it is important that you use as safely as possible.



Ecstasy is usually supplied as pills or powder. The pills come in different colours and many have pictures or logos stamped into them. Pills are usually swallowed, but some people grind and then snort them.

## What does it do?

How you react to ecstasy depends on how strong they are, the kind of mood you are in, who you are using with, how much you use and your size.

The effect of ecstasy depends on what you've taken but it will often give you an 'energy burst' and make you feel alert and alive. It makes sounds and colours more intense, can make people feel more talkative or sociable, and often makes people feel more connected to the people around them.

Ecstasy might give people a 'rush' but it can also cause some pretty unpleasant effects.

These include:

Tingling feelings in the arms and legs

Tightening of the jaw muscles, with tooth grinding and jaw clenching

Higher body temperature and more sweating

Faster heart beat

Nausea (feeling sick and wanting to vomit)

Tremors

Difficulty sleeping

Loss of appetite

Overheating

Dehydration.

## Ecstasy and your mental health

Many people use ecstasy because they think it will make them feel good but often people feel anxious, restless, irritable and suspicious when they use it. In extreme cases you might feel angrier and behave more violently than you would normally. Ecstasy can also cause paranoia; you might think that you are being talked about or watched when you aren't.



If you already have a mental health problem there is a risk that using ecstasy will make you feel much worse.

# Ecstasy



## What happens if I stop using?

If you have been using ecstasy regularly it is likely that you will experience withdrawal symptoms when you stop. How bad these are depends on how much you've been using and how often, as well as what kind of shape you are in. Withdrawal symptoms tend to be worst during the first week and then will start to ease off. In extreme cases some symptoms may hang around for a couple of months.

Some common withdrawal symptoms are:

Irritability
Sleeplessness
Depression/anxiety
Mood swings
Headaches
Feeling hungry
Difficulty concentrating.

## When someone overdoses

Taking too much ecstasy can cause someone to overdose. This may lead to things like loss of consciousness or overheating – it will look different depending on what's happening for the person (e.g. they may have mixed drugs or taken lots of ecstasy when they haven't eaten or slept for a few days).

If you are worried about someone overdosing you can:



**Call 000** – you won't get into trouble for asking for help



**Stay with them;** don't leave your friend alone



**Put your friend on their side if they are unconscious** or in case they vomit



**Keep an eye on their breathing.**

## Staying safe

There is always a risk that something bad will happen if you use ecstasy. You can reduce some of these risks by:



**Going low, going slow. Just use a bit at a time** and wait to see what it feels like before taking more.



**Not mixing with other drugs or alcohol** – it can get out of control quickly.



**Only using with people you trust.** It's good if someone in your group isn't using to keep an eye on you. Keep an eye on your mates too.



**Making sure that you eat,** even if you don't feel like it.



**Taking a break.** Make sure that you have ecstasy free days and try not to use them before anything big (e.g. exams).



**Calling an ambulance (000)** if things get bad.

## Getting help

If your ecstasy use is starting to affect things that matter, like your mental health, wellbeing or your friendships, it can be a good idea to talk to someone about your options, such as different ways to reduce or stop your use. Whatever you decide, **headspace** can help.



**headspace**

National Youth Mental Health Foundation

For more information, to find your nearest headspace centre or for online and telephone support, visit [headspace.org.au](http://headspace.org.au)