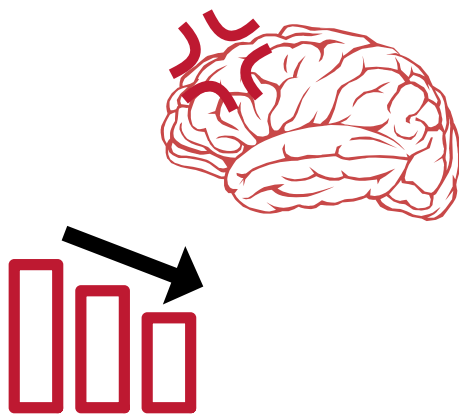


SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF METHAMPHETAMINE USE

Methamphetamine is a highly addictive central nervous system stimulant that alters the level of dopamine and increases reward-seeking behavior. Chronic and long-term use of methamphetamine can alter brain functioning leading to memory loss, poor decision-making, altered moods, and impulsivity, and can potentially damage the central nervous system.

Meth use tends to significantly alter a person's behavior and habits.



PSYCHOLOGICAL EFFECTS

- Confusion
- Loss of ability to concentrate and organize information
- Loss of ability to feel pleasure without the drug
- Paranoia
- Insomnia and fatigue
- Mood swings
- Irritability and anger
- Depression
- Anxiety and panic disorder
- Reckless, unprotected sexual behavior
- Tactile hallucinations or auditory hallucinations
- Severe depression that can lead to suicidal thoughts or attempts
- Episodes of sudden, violent behavior
- Severe memory loss that may be permanent

Changes in appearance can be additional clues to possible meth use.



PHYSICAL EFFECTS

- Tremor (shakiness)
- Weakness
- Dry mouth
- Weight loss and malnutrition
- Increased sweating
- Oily skin
- Sores caused by oily skin and by the person picking at his or her skin, a common effect of meth use
- Headaches
- Severe problems with teeth and gums caused by teeth grinding, decreased blood flow to the mouth, and decreased saliva
- Seizures
- Irregular heartbeat that can cause sudden death
- Heart attack or chronic heart problems, including the breaking down of the heart muscle
- Kidney failure and/or liver failure
- "Tweaking," movements that a person can't control that are repeated regularly
- Infected skin sores that can cause severe scarring