

## Safer-use Strategies: Uppers/Stimulants

Stimulants are "uppers" and include cocaine, crack, meth, MDMA (Molly) and bath salts, as well as prescribed drugs like Ritalin and Adderall. Here are some tips to help you stay safer and healthier no matter how you choose to change your use. Using more safely does not mean that you remove all risks, including death, but it can help you reduce your drug-related harm. You are worth it!

u use		Prepare for safer sex	<ul> <li>Why? Stimulant use can lower your inhibitions and turn up your sex drive.</li> <li>How? It's a good idea to think ahead and carry condoms, dams, lube and gloves with you. These barriers can prevent unwanted pregnancy and sexually transmitted infections like HIV and hepatitis C.</li> </ul>
Ways to stay healthier when you use		Test your drugs	<ul> <li>Why? You can find out if your drugs are cut with other drugs (like fentanyl) or fillers (like levamisole) that could harm you.</li> <li>How? Talk to providers about getting a urine drug testing kit and testing liquids before you shoot them. For pills and powders, check out https://dancesafe.org for testing kits.</li> </ul>
to stay healtl		Try to eat	<ul> <li>Why? Stimulants can drain your body and dull your appetite. Food and water replenish these important nutrients to help you stay healthy.</li> <li>How? Try to eat nutritious foods before using, pack healthy snacks and water on the go, and avoid using over a long time. Let you body rest for at least a day after using.</li> </ul>
Ways		Take care of your mouth	<ul> <li>Why? Some stimulants cause mouth dryness, sores, cracks, and teeth clenching.</li> <li>How? Drink water to keep yourself hydrated, and chew gum to keep your mouth moist and your teeth from grinding. Brushing your teeth can help control increased bacteria due to dry mouth. Use chapstick to prevent lip and mouth cracking.</li> </ul>
		Choose safer ways to use	<ul> <li>Why? Some ways of using drugs are less risky to your health.</li> <li>How? Taking drugs by mouth is safer than smoking which is safer than shooting. If you smoke crack, you can use a crack condom for your pipe. You can get clean works at the People's Harm Reduction Alliance or the King County Needle Exchange.</li> </ul>
Ways to use more safely		Shoot safer	<ul> <li>Why? Avoid overdose, bloodborne illness (HIV and hepatitis C), bacterial infections.</li> <li>How? Pace yourself until you know the strength of your stash. Shooting into veins in your arms or hands is safer than hitting blind into your groin or into your neck. Rotate sites and shoot downstream if possible. Using new, clean needles and works can help prevent bloodborne illnesses, like HIV and hepatitis C, and other infections.</li> </ul>
Ways to use		Avoid mixing drugs	<ul> <li>Why? Using stimulants and depressants, like opioids, alcohol or benzos, at the same time can have unexpected effects, put stress on your heart and lead to overdose.</li> <li>How? Try to stick to one drug at a time, especially when you are unsure of its strength or content.</li> </ul>
		Use with safe people in a safe place	<ul> <li>Why? Heavy stimulant use can cause paranoia or aggression that can lead to fights, hassels and arrests. People can take advantage of you when you're high.</li> <li>How? Avoid using with people you don't know or trust. Use where you feel safe and in control of the surroundings. Do not drive or ride your bike when you are high.</li> </ul>
ich you use		Less is more	<ul> <li>Why? You can avoid overdosing or experiencing drugs' toxic effects.</li> <li>How? You can decide how you want to limit your use. You could choose to buy only a certain amount or set a spending limit. Leave the rest of your money at home or in a safe place. You might ask a trusted friend to remind you of your limit.</li> </ul>
Ways to change how much you use		Choose not to use	<ul> <li>Why? Not usingeven for a few hours or daysgives your body a rest and may help you to avoid your body or mind becoming dependent on stimulants.</li> <li>How? Try a few hours of not using or introducing some nonuse days every week. Check in with a provider if you want to stop altogether.</li> </ul>
Ways to ch		Talk to a provider about withdrawal	<ul> <li>Why? Only alcohol and benzo withdrawal, which causes the shakes, seizures or DTs-can be deadly. However, other drugs may have uncomfortable withdrawal symptoms.</li> <li>How? Ask your provider if you are worrried about withdrawal or if you have HIV or are pregnant. They may be able to help with some of the symptoms.</li> </ul>

For more information, contact the Harm Reduction Research and Treatment Center at 1 (855) 320-1004 or at harrtlab@uw.edu.