Arizona State Office of Rural Health

Introduction to Stimulants

May 20, 2021

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Introduction to Stimulants

Haley Coles
Co-Founder and Executive Director of Sonoran Prevention Works

May 20, 2021
Introduction to Stimulants
Meth, Coke, & Pills

Haley Coles
May 20, 2021
Centering harm reduction in Arizona through participant-driven advocacy, education, and outreach

HOW WE DO IT

- Harm Reduction Outreach & Peer Support
- Training & Technical Assistance
- Legislative & Regulatory Advocacy
LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. Understand the effects of stimulants

2. Articulate the reasons why people use stimulants

3. Take away at least 2 tools to support people who use stimulants
Drug, Set, Setting

Drug
- Dose
- Potency
- Frequency
- Type

Benefits & risks

Set (Person)
- Motivation/relation
- Physiology
- Unique characteristics
- Ideas/beliefs

Setting (Environment)
- Support system
- Culture
- Social dynamic

Zinberg, 1984
WHAT ARE STIMULANTS?
Stimulants

- CNS stimulation
- Increased heart rate & blood pressure
- Enhanced cognition
- Energy & mood improvement

**Pre-History**
Coca & Ephedra use

**Late 19th Century**
- Cocaine,
- Amphetamine,
- Methamphetamine isolated

**1930’s**
Benzedrine & soldiers
Name That Drug

1. [Image of pills]
2. [Image of a powdery substance]
3. [Image of orange tablets]
4. [Image of a manufacturing process]
5. [Image of a white powdery substance]
All Stimulants

Benefits
• Reduced need to eat
• Increased productivity
• Feelings of wellbeing, happiness
• Increased libido
• Wakefulness
• Increased energy

Risks
• Dehydration
• Cardiovascular danger
• Serotonin depletion, comedown
• STIs
• Sleep deprivation
• Hyperthermia
BENEFITS, RISKS, AND MYTHS
METH

- Release of neurotransmitters
- 8-12 hours
- Snorted, smoked, injected, swallowed, anal insertion
- Party & Play
- “Meth mouth”
COCaine

- Release of neurotransmitters
- 15-60 minutes
- Snorted, smoked, injected, anal insertion
- Crack vs. coke
- “Crack babies”
MDMA

- Serotonin release
- 3-6 hours
- Stimulant + psychedelic
- Swallowed & snorted
- Hyperthermia & hyponatremia
- High adulteration
- “Not really a stimulant”
What’s the deal with “bath salts”? 
OverAmping
Symptoms

Physical
• Vomiting/dizziness
• Loss of consciousness
• Chest pain
• Overheating
• Chills
• Difficulty speaking
• Seizure
• Limb rigidity/cramping
• Shortness of breath

Psychological
• Extreme anxiety/panic
• Paranoia
• Hallucinations
• Agitation
• Hypervigilance
• Psychotic episode
WHAT DOES HARM REDUCTION DO?

Centers people who use drugs as *more than their drug use* and as *experts on their own care.*

Recognizes that drug use and recovery is complex and *exists along a continuum.* For some, *drugs meet important needs* so drug-related harm cannot be assumed and abstinence can be just *one of many* possible goals.

Aims to meet people “where they’re at” by supporting *ANY positive change.*

Harm reduction does not aim to minimize real harm related to substance use.
Some Theories of Substance Use

- Rational actor
- Disease model
- Biopsychosocial model
Route of Administration: Injecting

- Sterile, unused works
- Avoid missing shots
- HIV/HCV screening
- Don’t let others inject for you
- Vein health
- Citric/ascorbic acid
SAFER INJECTING

AVOID YOUR WRISTS
Nerves, veins and arteries are all very close together in the wrists. Shooting up here is dangerous and should be avoided!

AVOID HEAD & NECK
Overdosing is more likely when you shoot up near areas closest to the heart and brain. Abscesses are more dangerous here, too.

AVOID YOUR GROIN
There are many major arteries in your groin area - if you hit one, you could lose a leg, lose a lot of blood, or even die. Never inject into or around your genitals!

USE YOUR ARMS
Use surface veins in arms if they are in good shape. Rotate sites regularly.

CAREFULLY USE YOUR LEGS
Blood flows slowly in the legs, so inject slowly are carefully. Be very careful not to hit the artery behind the knee. It is easier to get blood clots when you inject in your legs.

USE YOUR HANDS & FEET
The veins on the back of your hands and the top of your feet are very sensitive. If you do inject here, it will hurt pretty badly. Inject slowly!

ROTATE YOUR SPOT!
When you stick a needle in your skin, it leaves a hole that has to heal. The same is true with your veins! You can keep your veins in good shape if you let the spot heal before you hit it on again.

If you don't let your veins heal:
- Collapsed Veins
- Infections
- Leaky Veins (Wasted Shots!)
- Abscesses from Leaks

Sticking a needle through a hole that isn't healed can push a blood clot into your bloodstream. This clot could get stuck somewhere else in your body and become dangerous!
Route of Administration: Smoking

- Sterile, unused works
- Pipe covers
- Pyrex, not homemade pipes
- Brass screens
- Chapstick, gum
Route of Administration: Snorting

- Don’t share
- Avoid dollar bills
- Rinse nostrils/snort warm water
- Vitamin E oil
De-escalation / OverAmping

- Isolate from noise, groups
- Back to wall
- Avoid cars
- Location change
- Walk it off
- Puzzles/fidget toys
- Music
- Cool cloths, fan

Adapted from Reframe Health & Justice
Create Safety

- Validate
- Distract
- Name
- Set boundaries

Adapted from Reframe Health & Justice
More Stimulant Harm Reduction

- Food & hydration
  - Ensure, electrolytes
- Oral health
- Alarms
- Drug testing
- Naloxone
- Regular STI & HCV screening
- Safer sex supplies
- Avoid mixing
Reducing or Stopping Use

- Increased moodiness
- Depression
- Extreme fatigue
- Sex less enjoyable
- Weight gain
Reducing or Stopping Use

• Motivational interviewing
• Contingency management
• Community reinforcement approach
• Cognitive behavioral therapy
• Pharmacotherapy
Questions?

Haley Coles
Executive Director
hcoles@spwaz.org

www.spwaz.org

@sonoranpreventionworks
@spw_az
Thank you!

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