

Get Tested. Get Treated. Get Cured.

HCV & Harm Reduction

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HEROIN

Heroin is a synthetic chemical made from morphine and its effects are similar only stronger. In its purest form heroin is a fine white powder. More often it will be found as a rose gray, brown or black powder in color. The color will depend on things added to it or “cut” with it, like sugar, caffeine, or fentanyl. Because these additional things added to heroin don’t fully dissolve they can block blood vessels and lead to infection or destruction of organs. It is important that when buying heroin, a person knows where the drug is coming from and what is in it. This can be done by using test kits. Heroin can be injected, smoked or sniffed. Heroin gives a strong sense of euphoria and sedation. These effects are generally what tends to make heroin very addictive. It strongly affects the central nervous system which leads to slower breathing and body movements. Overdose often results in a failure to breathe, organ failure and eventually death. If you encounter or experience an overdose and can call 911,

do so immediately. Because this isn’t always possible never injecting alone is important. Some short-term effects of heroin are a “rush”, slowed breathing, nausea, sedation, and drowsiness. Long term effects can be itching, physical and mental dependence, constipation, depression, and insomnia. Withdrawal from heroin can be physically painful and life threatening.

Remember:

- Heroin in its purest form is a white powder. If mixed with other things it will be grey, brown or black.
- Heroin is highly addictive both physically and mentally.
- If you encounter an overdose, or experience one yourself, call 911 immediately.
- Someone using heroin should know where it is coming from and what is in it. This can be done by using test kits.

learn more by visiting www.hcvadvocate.org

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