



Cocaine: Factsheet



Evidence ratings:



This resource has undergone expert review. See our Help/Q&A section for more details.

Year: Year 9–10, Year 11–12

Targeted Drugs: Cocaine

Tags: coke, Charlie, crack, snow, freebase

Time Allocated: Partial lesson (under 45mins)

Origin: Australian

Cost:

Free

What is Cocaine?

In Australia, Cocaine is known as coke, blow, charlie, C, dust, flake, nose candy, snow, white, crack, rock, freebase.

Cocaine is produced from the leaves of *Erthroxylon coca* plant, and comes in three main forms:

- A paste which is often off-white or light brown
- A powder which is often white or off-white
- A white or off-white crystal rock known as crack cocaine.

In Australia, cocaine is most commonly in a powder form which is often snorted. As with all powder drugs, it is often sold 'cut' (mixed) with other white powder substances which can sometimes be harmful in their own right.

Personal Stories

"It started off only occasionally. But soon I was taking cocaine in the morning just to get through the day. My friends stopped talking to me. My girlfriend left me and I had to steal from my own family just to pay for drugs."

–Francis, 17

How many young people have tried Cocaine?

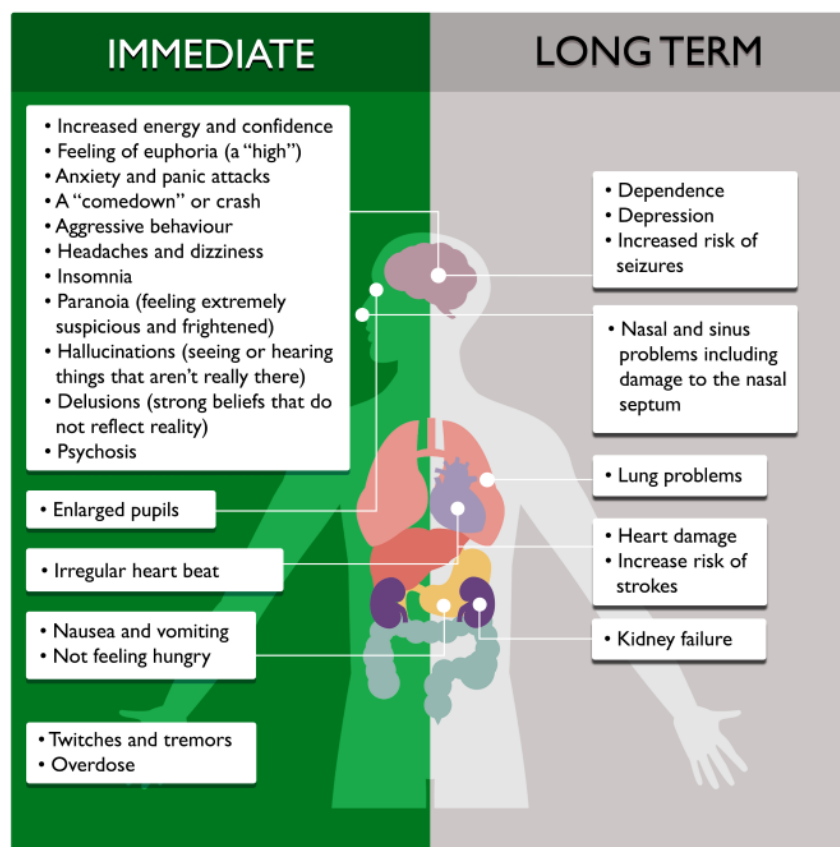
According to the 2022-2023 Australian secondary schools' survey, 1 in 100 students (1%) aged 12–17 used cocaine in the past month.

What are the effects of Cocaine?

When snorted or injected, cocaine quickly produces an intense 'rush'. This feeling or 'high' doesn't last very long — usually around 30–45 minutes if snorted.

The effects of cocaine can be immediate or long-term, as listed in the table below.

| Immediate | Long-term |
|--|---|
| Enlarged pupils | Dependence (see glossary) |
| Irregular heart beat | Nasal and sinus problems including damage to the nasal septum |
| Not feeling hungry | Depression |
| Increased energy and confidence | Heart damage |
| Feeling of euphoria (a "high") | Lung problems |
| Nausea and vomiting | Kidney failure |
| Anxiety and panic attacks | Increased risk of strokes and seizures |
| A "comedown" or crash (see glossary) | |
| Aggressive behaviour | |
| Headaches and dizziness | |
| Twitches and tremors | |
| Insomnia | |
| Paranoia (feeling extremely suspicious and frightened) | |
| Hallucinations (seeing or hearing things that aren't really there) | |
| Delusions (strong beliefs that do not reflect reality) | |
| Psychosis (see glossary) | |
| Overdose | |



Evidence Base

This factsheet was developed following expert review by researchers at the Matilda Centre for Research in Mental Health and Substance Use at the University of Sydney, the National Drug & Alcohol Research Centre at the University of New South Wales, and the National Drug Research Institute at Curtin University.

- Credit to the Home Office for quotes adapted from Talk to Frank

Sources

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