

Lysergic Acid Diethylamide (LSD)

DRUG CLASS: Psychedelics

STREET NAMES: LSD, Acid, Paper, Sugar, Window Pane, Blotter, Illusion.

WHAT IS IT?

Synthetic hallucinogenic drugs that are made from a fungus. Psychedelics interfere with the normal brain chemistry. This drug triggers a wide range of changes in thought, perception, and behavior. Discovered in 1943 and widely used in the culture for young people in the 1960s, LSD has recently become popular in the 1990s. This is a chemical that is so strong that a single flake can cause actions similar to mental illness.

There are many factors involved in the effects hallucinogens will have. For example, the size of the dose, emotional state of mind of the user, and the surroundings all play a role in determining whether the user has a good or bad "trip." A bad "trip" can include terrifying hallucinations, anxiety, fear of loss of control, paranoia, feeling all powerful and a sense that the high will never end. Someone with schizophrenic tendencies can have a really bad reaction to psychedelics, which would exaggerate those tendencies.

WHAT CAN HAPPEN TO YOUR BODY?

AT FIRST:

- Changes in brain functioning.
- Perceptual and thought distortions.
- Hallucinations, skewed reality, and rapid mood swings.
- Obsessive and negative thinking.
- Heart beats faster. Blood pressure rises.
- Body temperature rises.
- Feel cold, shiver, get chills.
- Can't see or hear well.
- Get confused and panic.

OVER TIME:

- Permanent mental problems.
- Difficulties interacting with others and distortions of perception and reality.
- See things that aren't there (Hallucinations).
- Severe depression.
- Suicide.

MEDICAL USES:

None. Although LSD has been tried as a treatment for various forms of mental illness, the

only currently approved research involving the drug is aimed at testing potential value as a treatment for drug dependence.

DURATION:

LSD can take 1-2 hours before its effects are first felt. The effects are typically long lasting, as much as 18-20 hours. Side effects can last for days, weeks, or result in permanent change in thinking and/or personality.

TRENDS:

LSD use has been on the rise for several years, as dosage strength has decreased. Lighter dosage has also meant a set of less intense, more easily-managed effects, resulting in fewer adverse reactions than were common during LSD's first trip around the recreational drug circuit a generation ago.

DEMOGRAPHICS:

LSD has always been something of a young person's drug, and today, its being taken by even younger individuals. A growing percentage of high school students are reporting using LSD at least once.

OTHER DRUGS IN THE SAME CLASS:

Mushrooms: Also known as: Shrooms and Magic Mushrooms.

Psilocybin is the active element in these mushrooms. Highs are similar to LSD, although less intense and shorter. Highs last 4-5 hours. Mushrooms have a bitter taste and often cause nausea and vomiting before the effects of the drug is felt. The greatest danger in taking the mushrooms is mistaking them with other deadly mushrooms, that can kill an individual within hours.

Mescaline: Also known as Mesc, Peyote and Buttons.

This chemical comes from the peyote cactus. The cut and dried tops of the cactus are called buttons. It can take anywhere from 2-10 buttons to get high. They are eaten or used to make tea. Mescaline is also available in a synthetic, crystallized form. The effects are similar to LSD with the nausea that precedes the mushroom high. The high lasts approximately 12 hours. Mescaline has been used in Native American rituals.