Snorting heroin? Dosage? [1]

Dear Alice,

What is the average dosage of heroin when snorted?

Signed,

?Brown Sugar

Answer

Dear Brown Sugar,

Estimating the average dosage of heroin in any form can be quite difficult, if not impossible. It seems to depend on the quality of the heroin itself ? where it came from, whether it's natural or synthesized, how much it is cut and with what (street heroin can range from zero to 90 percent pure), as well as a person's body size and developed tolerance. Snorting it, you have to snort more than if you were injecting or smoking, and it takes approximately 10-15 minutes to get high (longer than from injecting or smoking). When you snort heroin, you may get sick, your nose will likely run uncontrollably, and you can get stomach cramps.

Heroin causes a unique sensation of pleasure and pain, apparently different from other less toxic drugs. It also affects the heart, breathing, reproductive system, digestion, excretion, thinking, cough and nausea centers, eyes, voice box, muscles, and immune system. The drug's ability to relax muscles can cause your eyelids to droop, your head to nod, and your speech to become slurred and slowed. Walking is also slowed. Your pupils become pinpoint and do not react to light, your skin dries out, and itching increases. Heroin also affects the hormonal system; a woman's period is delayed and a man's testosterone production decreases; sexual desire is dulled, often to the point of indifference.

Non-intravenous heroin doesn't give nearly as intense a rush and so is thought to be less addictive. People who snort heroin can often do so on and off for long periods of time without becoming strongly addicted. This occasional use of heroin is called "chipping.". Unfortunately, a high percentage of chippers become addicts?most regular users begin as chippers, with no thought that they would ever become addicts.

Heroin use comes with many negative health effects as well as a significant chance of addiction. With such high risks you may want to consider whether or not using heroin is something you want to do (or continue doing). If you are concerned about drug use, abuse, or dependence (yours or someone else's) you may want to speak to your health care provider. S/he can answer your questions and connect you with resources specific to your needs.
Columbia students can make an appointment with Medical Services [2] (Morningside Campus) using Open Communicator [3] or by calling 212-854-2284, or Student Health Services [4] (CUMC Campus) by calling 212-305-3400. You also may want check out the Go Ask Alice! Alcohol and Other Drugs [5] information section, browse the archive [6], or check out the related questions below. Whether or not heroin use is right for you is something that only you can decide. Fortunately, there are a lot of resources, from health care providers to websites, to help decide what’s best for you.

Alice!
Category:
Alcohol & Other Drugs [7]
Sedatives, Tranquillizers, & Other Depressants [8]

Related questions

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