



What is Heroin?

Heroin is a highly addictive drug derived from morphine, which is obtained from opium poppy plants. It is a "downer" or depressant that affects the brain's pleasure systems and interferes with the brain's ability to perceive pain. It is classified as a Schedule I drug by the DEA (Drug Enforcement Administration).

What does Heroin look like?

A white to dark brown powder or a tar-like substance.

How is Heroin used?

Heroin can be injected into a vein ("mainlining"), injected into a muscle, placed on tinfoil and inhaled as smoke through a straw or snorted as powder via the nose.



What are the short term effects of Heroin?

After an injection of heroin, the user reports feeling a surge of euphoria ("rush") accompanied by a warm flushing of the skin, a dry mouth, and heavy extremities. Mental functioning becomes clouded due to the depression of the central nervous system. Other effects include vomiting and constipation.

What are the long term effects of Heroin?

Chronic users may develop collapsed veins, infection of the heart lining and valves, abscesses, constipation and gastrointestinal cramping, and liver or kidney disease. In addition to the effects of the drug itself, street heroin may have additives that do not really dissolve and result in clogging the blood vessels that lead to the lungs, liver, kidneys, or brain. As higher doses are used over time, physical dependence and addiction develop.

With physical dependence, the body has adapted to the presence of the drug and withdrawal symptoms may occur if use is reduced or stopped.



Prescription Opioid Abuse: A First Step to Heroin Use?

Nearly half of young people who inject heroin surveyed in three recent studies reported abusing prescription opioids before starting to use heroin. Some individuals

reported taking up heroin because it is cheaper and easier to obtain than prescription opioids

For more information, visit our website: www.safecoalition.org or call (908) 782-3909.

Heroin in Hunterdon

Managed by:



- ♦ Heroin abuse among teens is on the rise in Hunterdon County. Teens begin misusing pills which leads to Heroin abuse.
- ♦ Hunterdon County Police Officers are now equipped with the drug **Narcan**, an antidote for heroin and other opiates. Narcan helps save lives for those who are experiencing an opiate overdose.
- ♦ In 2015, 40 Heroin overdoses were reported by law enforcement in Hunterdon County, as compared to 12 in 2014. This represents a 333% increase in just one year.
- ♦ So far in 2016, 32 drug overdoses have been reported to law enforcement, 30 of which are Heroin / Opiate related. Of these overdoses, there were 17 Narcan saves and 10 fatalities. The individuals experiencing these drug overdoses ranged in age from 20 to 54.
- ♦ Warren County had 279 drug arrests in 2015. This would be equivalent to one-fourth (1/4) of all Warren County kindergarten children.
- ♦ In 2015, Warren County reported 25 drug overdoses: 12 fatal and 13 non-fatal.
- ♦ There were 91 Narcan administrations in Warren County in 2015 (which is equivalent to half of the student body for seven Warren County schools).



What to watch out for:

There is no cookie cutter heroin user. Adults between the ages of 18-25 years old are the heaviest users of heroin and other opiates, but heroin knows no age. People aged from 12 years to older than 26 years old are victims of heroin addiction; they also come from middle- or upper-middle-class suburban families.

People use heroin because it comes in various forms which are easier to consume and it is affordable and cheap.

Visible Symptoms: Shortness of breath, dry mouth, small pupils, sudden changes in behavior, disorientation, cycles of hyper alertness followed by suddenly nodding off, droopy appearance (as if arms and legs are heavy).



Household/Community Behaviors: Crimes against family and friends such as items of value missing (jewelry or electronic devices), unusual wording or codes used in social media or on cell phones, lack of motivation or memory, substantial increases in sleeping.