

Pride briefing paper

5th August 2017



We predict that the most popular substances used during Pride might be:

Methamphetamine ***Ketamine*** ***Alcohol*** ***MDMA/Ecstasy***

Other substances which may be used:

Poppers **Laughing Gas** **GHB/GBL** **Cocaine** **Mephedrone**

Methamphetamine: Crystal meth, Tina, Ice

Commonly referred to locally as Tina, methamphetamine is a powerful stimulant drug. It can be snorted, smoked or injected. Even small amounts can produce euphoria, arousal, wakefulness, increased physical activity, decreased appetite and increased respiration. The very intense high can last for between 4 and 12 hours. Many local Tina users are men who have sex with men.

Desired effects: Euphoria, arousal, wakefulness, energy, intense initial rush.

Undesired effects: Nausea, panic attacks, compulsive repetitive behaviour & jaw clenching, increase your heart rate & blood pressure, severe psychosis, inability to sleep.

Harm reduction:

- Take multivitamins & stay hydrated before and after using and drink plenty of water.
- Use nasal balm to avoid inflammation, infection and damage to nasal lining. Remember to switch nostrils.
- Avoid injecting as this could lead to cardiac arrest. If you do inject, get clean, free equipment from your local Needle Exchange and don't share equipment.
- You might not feel hungry but eat light, healthy, high carb / protein foods or shakes.
- Use a new condom or dam with every partner & water based lube. Long or rough sex sessions can cause bleeding which increases the risk of catching & transmitting STI's like Hepatitis, Syphilis or HIV.
- Only take a limited supply out with you and avoid using any more. Set a time you want to be home by and stick to it. Ask yourself, is this the sex you would choose to have if you were sober?
- If you've put yourself at risk, accessing PEP from sexual health services or A&E could prevent you from contracting HIV.

Ketamine: K, Special K, Katy, Ket



Ketamine is usually a white powder or sometimes in a pill form. It produces multiple effects which are dose dependent. It is described as an anaesthetic with analgesic, stimulant and psychedelic properties.

Desired effects: Low doses can be stimulating, with increased energy, euphoria, mild dissociative effects and hallucinations. Higher doses increase the dissociative effects and hallucinations with users reporting sensations of travel to other worlds, floating, increased insight and creativity.

Undesired effects: 'K hole' - physically incapable of moving & feeling detached from your body/surroundings. Unaware of injuries due to painkilling effects.

Harm reduction:

- Avoid using with other drugs as this could cause unexpected effects or overdose especially if mixed with depressants like alcohol, G, benzo's etc.
- Drink water to stay hydrated (no more than a pint an hour).
- Be aware of the dose you take, larger doses will have stronger dissociative effects which can be unpleasant in a festival/club environment.
- Be careful how much you put in a bomb- be aware it will take longer to feel effects so do not redoes for at least 1 hour.
- If snorting, change nostrils and rinse with water when possible. Do not share snorting equipment as you could spread Hep C.

Alcohol

People vary in how they metabolise or react to alcohol, so people can be affected differently by drinking similar amounts. Groups particularly vulnerable to the negative effects of alcohol are; young people, older people, low body weight, those with other health problems or taking medicines or other drugs.

Desired effects: Relaxed, sociable, confident, light headed, warm.

Undesired effects: Uncoordinated, unbalanced, nauseous, dizzy. Alcohol poisoning- confused, severely slurred speech, loss of co-ordination, vomiting, irregular or slow breathing, hypothermia (pale/blue-tinged skin), stupor (being conscious but unresponsive), unconscious.

Harm reduction:

- Drink water before and after drinking alcohol – this will hydrate you so hangover will not be so bad!
- Eat before you start drinking, the alcohol will be absorbed slower.
- Know how many units you are drinking- recommended limit is 14 units per **week** for men and women.
- Don't mix your drinks and try to drink smaller measures: bottles of beer rather than pints, singles instead of doubles, smaller glasses of wine.
- Alternate alcohol with a soft drink or a weaker drink.
- Avoid mixing alcohol with caffeinated drinks, the stimulant effects may lead to drinking more and is associated with increased aggression.
- Keep your drink with you at all times, so no-one can spike it.

MDMA/Ecstasy: *Mandy, pills, E, molly*

Available in powder or pill forms. Increasing reports in the media over the last few months of people being hospitalised from using MDMA or pills. Reported that pills contain up to 3 times the amount of MDMA recommended for use.



Desired effects: Energised, euphoric, connected to others, empathic, aroused.

Undesired effects: Nauseous, overheated, panic, paranoia, increased heart rate & blood pressure.

Harm reduction:

- Strengths can vary so take $\frac{1}{4}$ pill or $1/10^{\text{th}}$ of a gram of powder and then wait for at least 1 hour.
- Drink water but no more than 1 pint an hour. Avoid caffeinated drinks.
- Take regular breaks from dancing or hot environments as you could overheat, get some fresh air and sit down regularly.
- Chew on some chewing gum to reduce harm from gurning/clenching your jaw.
- Avoid mixing with other substances as the effects can be unpredictable.
- Do not share snorting equipment, swap nostrils & wash them out when you can.

Poppers: *Amyl Nitrate, Liquid Gold, Rush*

Usually found in the form of a liquid chemical sold in a small bottle.

They dilate the blood vessels and allow more blood to get to the heart.

Small glass bottles of Poppers could easily be confused with bottles of GBL. Poppers are sniffed from the bottle whereas GBL is swallowed. Swallowing poppers could lead to serious illness or even death.



Desired effects: Short, sharp head-rush like 'high', enhanced sexual experiences

Undesired effects: Chemicals burns around nose/mouth, irritated nose/throat, nauseous, faint, disorientated

Harm reduction:

- They can burn your skin on contact & they're highly flammable so avoid skin contact.
- Poppers are potentially dangerous for anyone with heart problems, anaemia or glaucoma (an eye disease) due to sudden drop in blood pressure & reduced oxygen supply.
- You may lose consciousness so don't use alone. Using poppers with alcohol can increase this risk.
- Poppers are linked with risky sexual behaviour so bring a condom!
- Fatal 'sudden sniffing death syndrome' has been reported due to development of an abnormal heart rhythm when taking poppers.
- There are a number of reports in recent years of cases of temporary and permanent loss of vision in users of poppers. If you are experiencing problems with your eyesight after having used poppers, we would strongly advise you get medical advice.

Laughing Gas: *Balloons, NOS, Nitrous, Nitrous Oxide*

Colourless, non-flammable gas that is slightly sweet smelling & tasting. Recreational users often get it from whipped-cream chargers, sometimes called 'whippets', which are single-use, finger-length steel cartridges containing 8g of highly pressurised nitrous oxide. In order to produce its dissociative effects, nitrous oxide is inhaled, usually by mouth with the use of a balloon.



Desired effects: Euphoria, giggling, laughing, mild hallucinogenic effects e.g. distorted sound.

Undesired effects: Nausea, headaches, dizziness, unpleasant dissociation, loss of balance.

Harm reduction:

- Do not inhale straight from the canister, it may have chemical residue & may be pressurised at a very low temperature which could cause frostbite.
- You may be more prone to accidents due to dizziness/lack of balance so avoid standing near roads, cliffs etc.
- Do not use in enclosed spaces or cover your mouth/nose as you may reduce your oxygen supply to dangerous levels.

GHB/GBL: *G, Gina, Liquid Ecstasy, Liquid X, Juice, Geebs*

GHB is a central nervous system (CNS) depressant, with sedative & anaesthetic qualities. GBL is a colourless, slightly oily liquid that is clear to semi opaque. It has a distinctive taste that some users have described as being distinctly chemical, like a solvent, nail varnish or paint stripper.



Desired effects: Euphoria, relaxation, sexual arousal, reduced inhibitions.

Undesired effects: Sedation, unconsciousness, dizzy, confused, seizures.

Harm reduction:

- G can be fatal. It is very easy to overdose on it, both because the strength can vary from bottle to bottle & because the doses involved are measured in such small quantities (0.3 – 2mls). Be prepared and measure accurately with a low dose.
- Take G in a drink such as fruit juice or milk to reduce irritation to your stomach.
- Mixing with depressant drugs such as ketamine or alcohol, this is particularly dangerous as this can trigger instant collapse or an overdose reaction.
- GHB & GBL have been found to reduce the efficiency of some HIV medication and have also been implicated in sexual assaults or 'date rapes'.
- GBL is physically addictive & stopping it without medical supervision can be fatal; sudden withdrawal poses dangerous health risks & can require an in-patient detox. If you're withdrawing go to A&E.

Cocaine: *Coke, Charlie, white, ching*

Powder cocaine is one of the most commonly used drugs in the UK.

It is a stimulant and is usually snorted although it can be prepared for injecting. It is a white powder and the effects are fairly short which may lead to people using a lot in one session.



Desired effects: Energised, confident, chatty, high.

Undesired effects: High temperature, palpitations, strong desire to re-dose, aggressive, chest pains.

Harm reduction:

- Avoid using with alcohol, when used together they combine to make a more toxic chemical which increases the likelihood of unpleasant effects.
- Using cocaine is very risky if you have high blood pressure or a heart condition, taking too much can lead to fits or even heart attack.
- Avoid injecting & if you do, always use clean equipment. Do not share snorting equipment!
- Cocaine can reduce your appetite, make sure you eat something especially if you're being very active.
- Take time out to cool down and relax.

Mephedrone: *Meph, Drone, MCAT, Meow Meow*

Usually a white/off-white powder, similar stimulant & entactogenic ('loved up') effects to ecstasy. Mephedrone can be snorted, swallowed, inserted 'up the bum' or injected, it has a strong, unpleasant smell, not unlike cat urine.



Desired effects: Energised, euphoric, sociable, chatty.

Undesired effects: Increased heart rate & palpitations, sweating/hot flushes, dry mouth, numbed fingers or toes, blurred vision, chest pain, paranoia.

Harm reduction:

- Drink plenty of water and take time out to reduce temperature.
- Chew on some chewing gum to reduce jaw clenching/grinding teeth.
- Avoid using in binges, only have a reasonable amount on you to avoid using all of your batch in one go.
- Avoid injecting, if you do- use clean works! Swap nostrils and clean them when you can.
- Mephedrone may be cut with other chemicals and can vary in strength so only use a small amount and wait for at least 1 hour.

Trends to be aware of:

- 2C family (2CI, 2CB, 2CE)

A group of substances that are both stimulants and psychedelic. They have been described as a mix between MDMA and LSD. Different substances within this category will vary in how hallucinogenic they are and users may experience something much more intense than they are anticipating. In addition, 2C substances are generally sold in pills or powders and may resemble other common substances.

It is always advised to test any new batch of substances with a very small dose at first to see how you react.

- Polydrug use

Polydrug use is when someone uses more than one substance. This could be taking more than one substance at the same time or it could be using more substances to relieve a 'come down' or a 'hangover'.

Using two or more substances (including alcohol) at a time is risky as it can make the effects unpredictable. Some substances just don't work well together and can produce unpleasant and/or dangerous effects.

Taking two or more drugs that fall into the depressant category is especially dangerous as it can result in an overdose which can lead to coma, respiratory depression (difficulty breathing) and death. Mixing depressants and stimulants can make the user less aware of how intoxicated they are and/or increase their frequency of use.

It is important to know that prescribed and over the counter medication can also interact with each other, alcohol and drugs.

Risky combinations:

Alcohol & cocaine

GBL/GHB & another depressant

Ketamine & alcohol

- Potent Ecstasy/MDMA & Cocaine associated with hospitalisations or death



It has been observed that MDMA/Ecstasy powder & pills are high in strength at the moment, some up to 3 times the recommended amount. This means people are more at risk of the negative side effects of use such as; dehydration, overheating, confusion etc. In addition, there have been recent alerts about high purity cocaine in the local area.

If people choose to use either drug it is recommended to start with a very low dose and WAIT for at least 1 hour before taking anymore.

Be overdose aware- download full factsheets from www.overdoseday.com

WHAT ARE STIMULANTS?

Stimulants are a category of drug that increase alertness and heart rate, producing an effect of increased confidence, and energy.

Large doses of these drugs can result in anxiety, panic, seizures, headaches, stomach cramps, aggression and paranoia.

Examples of stimulant drugs include: amphetamines, cocaine and Ecstasy (MDMA).

SIGNS OF OVERDOSE

Physical signs

- Hot, flushed or sweaty skin
- Headaches
- Chest pain
- Unsteadiness
- Rigid muscles, tremors or spasms
- Uncontrolled movements or seizures
- Difficulty breathing

Psychological signs

- Psychotic symptoms in individuals with no prior mental illness
- Severe agitation or panic
- Altered mental state, such as confusion or disorientation

OVERDOSE RESPONSE

Before you act, check for danger

Call an ambulance, tell the operator your location, and stay on the line.

Move the person to a quiet, safe room away from bystanders, noise, excessive light, heat and other stimulation.

If confused or panicking, try to reassure them.

If overheating, try to cool them down by loosening outer clothing or putting a wet towel on the back of the neck or under their arms.

If you can't get a response or the person is unconscious, put them in the recovery position.

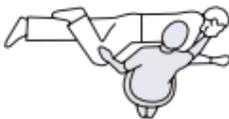
If muscle spasms or seizures occur, remove anything from the immediate environment that might cause injury.

The Recovery Position

Support face Place the arm nearest to you at right angles to the body. Place their other hand against their cheek.



Lift Leg Get hold of the far leg just above the knee and pull it up, keeping the foot flat on the ground.



Roll over Keep their hand pressed against their cheek and pull on the upper leg to roll them towards you and onto their side.



WHAT NOT TO DO IN THE EVENT OF A SUSPECTED OVERDOSE

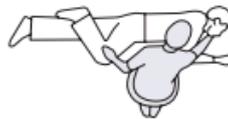
- Do NOT ignore snoring or gurgling: This could mean someone is having trouble breathing.
- Do NOT leave the person alone.
- Do NOT give the person anything to eat or drink, or try to induce vomiting.

The Recovery Position

Support face Place the arm nearest to you at right angles to the body. Place their other hand against their cheek.



Lift Leg Get hold of the far leg just above the knee and pull it up, keeping the foot flat on the ground.



Roll over Keep their hand pressed against their cheek and pull on the upper leg to roll them towards you and onto their side.



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WHAT ARE DEPRESSANTS?

Benzodiazepines, barbiturates (medical depressants), and alcohol all slow the central nervous system to produce a calming effect.

These substances are often prescribed to relieve pain, help you sleep or in the case of alcohol, used recreationally when socialising. However, when taken in excessive amounts or in combinations with other drugs, depressants can depress normal functions such as breathing and heart rate until they eventually stop, resulting in brain damage or death.

SIGNS OF OVERDOSE

- Vomiting
- Unresponsive, but awake
- Limp body
- Pale and/or clammy face
- Blue fingernails or lips
- Shallow or erratic breathing, or not breathing at all
- Slow or erratic pulse (heartbeat)
- Choking or sounds of a gurgling noise
- Loss of consciousness

OVERDOSE RESPONSE

Call an ambulance, tell the operator your location, and stay on the line.

Be prepared to give CPR if they stop breathing before an ambulance arrives.

Ensure the person has adequate air by keeping crowds back or opening windows. Loosen tight clothing.

If the person is unconscious or wants to lie down, put them in the recovery position and continue to monitor them.

Provide paramedics with as much information as possible, such as what, and how much of the drug was taken, how long ago and any pre-existing medical conditions. If the drug came in a bottle or packet, give the packaging to the ambulance officers.

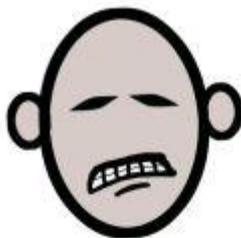
Other drug related emergencies



If they are overheating: cool them down by removing outer clothing; fan them; use a wet cloth on their skin*; take them outside or somewhere cool. If they are conscious allow them to sip water or a non alcoholic drink.

Call an ambulance.

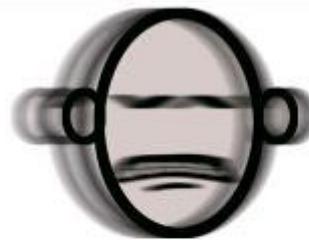
**Do not use very cold water, this can repel the superficial blood vessels deeper into the body and prevent heat loss. Even lukewarm water is fine as it mimics the temperature of sweat, the body's natural way to reduce temperature.*



If they have chest pains: sit them down in a calm environment and reassure them. **Call an ambulance.**



If they can't be woken: (by shaking their shoulders and calling their name), or you notice a blueness of the skin, including lips or fingernails (or greyish for darker complexions) or they have trouble breathing, **call an ambulance.**



If they are having a 'fit': make sure the area is safe and there is nothing they could hurt themselves on. **Call an ambulance.** Be sure to inform the paramedics if the fit stops and starts, if it doesn't stop within a couple of minutes or if the person turns blue.



Vomiting/feeling unwell: vomiting is usually nature's way of telling you've had too much. If somebody is unwell, don't give them anything to eat and only let them drink water (never force them to drink anything). If after vomiting they want to sleep, let them but keep your eye on them. Make sure they are lying on their side (see the **recovery position** on next page.)



Bad trip/freak out/paranoia: if somebody is having a frightening or disturbing drug experience or have become very paranoid, take them somewhere that is quiet where **they** feel safe (ideally a low stimulus environment and not a dance floor in a nightclub). Try to calm and reassure them ("it will pass - the drugs will wear off"). This can take hours, so be prepared to be patient. If they become panicky and you notice them breathing very fast, get them to control their breathing by slowing it down or breathing into a paper bag. If any of these disturbing experiences carry on after the drug has worn off, they need to speak to a doctor or drug service.



Safety & emergency help within ticketed areas

There are 2 **First Aid Posts** in Preston Park:

- Near to the **Main Stage**
- Next to the **Wild Fruit Dance Tent**

There will also be **First Aid Posts** at:

- **Marine Parade** (opposite Madeira Place)
- **Pleasure Gardens** (Old Steine Gardens)

Saturday: All Sunday: Marine Parade only

If someone is unwell or in trouble then get them to one of these tents where the St John Ambulance Team will offer support, advice & First Aid.



Services

Pavilions Drug & Alcohol Service will be at Pride taking part in the parade and in the community stalls at the park from 12-5pm. We will be handing out free promotional gifts as well as harm reduction and safety advice for the day. Richmond House, Richmond Road, Brighton, BN2 3RL. **01273 731900**.



Safe Space helps those who are distressed, either through being intoxicated, injured, have lost their friends or are unable to get home and need support. St Pauls Church, West Street.



Open Friday 4th August 11pm – 3:30am

Saturday 5th August 10:30pm – 4am

ru-ok? work alongside under 18s whose lives are affected by substance misuse, please signpost any under 18s who might benefit from support to this service. 1 Regency Road, Brighton, BN1 2RU. **01273 293966**.



Mental Health Rapid Response Service provide rapid assessment for people who may be at risk and may not be able to keep themselves safe, or for people considering attending A&E. Call **0300 304 0078** 24 hours a day, seven days a week.



Samaritans a confidential service offering support to anyone experiencing distress. Available 24 hours a day everyday by calling **116 123**.

