



SHORT-TERM EFFECTS

It sounds like a horror movie plot, a zombie type drug eating away the flesh of humans! But it's not. Some short-term effects of usage are:

- Inflamed and damaged veins
- Hallucinations
- Sleep deprivation
- Memory loss
- Slurred speech
- Damage to skin tissue and muscle
- Infections
- Blood poisoning
- Risk of being exposed to HIV/AIDS and Hepatitis
- Possible immediate death

LONG-TERM EFFECTS

It doesn't take long to get hooked on Krokodil. Many users are already addicted to heroin, but turn to Krokodil because it's cheaper. The long-term effects are pretty scary:

- Risk of organ damage, including brain, liver and kidney damage
- Soft tissue and muscle damage
- Skin damage and decay (eventually falls off and exposes bone)
- Gangrene
- Ulcerations around injection sites
- Tooth loss
- Speech impediment
- Amputations
- Death (life expectancy of a user is only 1 to 2 years)

SAYING "NO" TO KROKODIL

When someone asks you to use Krokodil, be polite, say "no thanks," and walk away. Simple as that. Or you can try one of these:

- "Nah, that's OK. I heard that stuff eats away at your skin."
- "No way! I'm afraid of needles."
- "No thanks, that stuff is very addictive."

WORK IT OUT!

Time to test what you've learned, so you'll be ready, in case a friend offers you this drug.

1. Krokodil is a "safe" alternative to Heroin.
 - a. True
 - b. False
2. Tooth Loss is a long-term effect of Krokodil use?
 - a. True
 - b. False
3. When you use Krokodil, your skin and muscle tissue can rot off of your bone.
 - a. True
 - b. False
4. Krokodil is not very addictive.
 - a. True
 - b. False
5. Krokodil is the street name for the toxic mixture desomorphine.
 - a. True
 - b. False

KROKODIL



Answers: 1. b, 2. a, 3. a, 4. b, 5. a

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THE DRUG THAT BITES BACK

POISONOUS MIXTURE

What is Krokodil?

Krokodil, a derivative of morphine, is a new designer drug that originated in Russia in 2002. It became very popular in Russia due to the availability of codeine for purchase without a prescription – anyone could walk into a pharmacy and buy codeine tablets, which is the starting point for creating Krokodil.

Krokodil is also known as “synthetic heroin”. In comparison to heroin, Krokodil has a stronger high and is much cheaper than heroin, which is why heroin addicts have made Krokodil their drug of choice. But Krokodil is much more dangerous. The life expectancy of a heroin addict is four to seven years. The life expectancy of a Krokodil addict is only a year or two. Here’s why. Krokodil contains a combination of codeine (a drug found in many over-the-counter medicines such as pain killers and cough syrup) and a bunch of toxic chemicals such as gasoline, paint thinner and hydrochloric acid. This produces an addictive mixture called desomorphine. Desomorphine is eight to ten times more potent than morphine. The final product is most often an impure, orange-colored liquid.

KROKODIL IN THE US

Krokodil has quickly made its way into the United States. The first known case was in September of 2013 in Arizona, but the drug had reportedly been in the US since 2011. Since then, several other cases involving Krokodil usage have been reported, in states like Utah, Oklahoma and Illinois. The Drug Enforcement Administration is concerned that Krokodil usage will spread as quickly as it has in Russia.

WHAT’S IN A NAME ANYWAY?

Krokodil gets its name from the disgusting and deadly effects it has on users’ bodies: Addicts quickly develop green, scaly skin, rotten flesh and infections at the injection site. Also, desomorphine’s street name is Krokodil because of the way it devours its users, similar to a crocodile.

IN THE JAWS OF THE “KROK”

You’re hanging out at a friend’s house, just listening to music, when someone says they heard of this new drug called Krokodil that gives you this awesome high. The best part is, it can be made right in the kitchen. Everyone is bored, so they decide to give it a try.

After cooking the first batch, you and your friends inject it into your arms. You become addicted immediately. You become so dependent on the drug, that you start cooking several batches each day. You can never get enough to satisfy your craving. In between “hits”, your body goes through very painful withdrawals. Eventually, your skin starts to rot away and your teeth are falling out from decay.

It’s been a year since your first “hit” and three of your friends have now died from using Krokodil. You know your life will be cut short if you keep using, but you just can’t stop.

ADDICTION & WITHDRAWALS

A Full Time Job

In most cases, a Krokodil user becomes an addict after one hit. That’s when their habit turns into a full time job. You see, the high that comes with using Krokodil only lasts for about an hour and a half, with the symptoms of withdrawal setting in soon after. Krokodil takes about thirty minutes to prepare, so soon after “shooting up”, the user is cooking more product. This short time table traps the user in a twenty-four hour a day cycle of cooking and injecting in order to avoid the painful withdrawal symptoms.

Heroin is known to have some of the most painful withdrawal symptoms of any drug. Krokodil, or “synthetic heroin” is no different. As a matter of fact, the withdrawal symptoms are much worse than heroin. With heroin, the main withdrawal symptoms last from five to ten days, whereas Krokodil can result in a month of unbearable pain. Once a user becomes addicted, it is common for them to die within one to two years.



FLESH EATING DRUG

An “Un-Friendly” Ending!

Jeff and Wendy were life-long friends. Now in the 11th grade, they’re closer than ever. But the past year, they’ve had their share of ups and downs. Jeff lost his dad to cancer and Wendy’s parents divorced. Along with a few friends, Jeff and Wendy started smoking marijuana, to “take the edge off”. Shortly after, their grades began to drop and they started skipping school. One day, a friend of theirs introduced them to Heroin. Marijuana wasn’t giving them enough of a “high” that they craved, so they decided to try it. Wendy was very afraid of needles, but she was so depressed, she gave in and tried it also. After one hit, they were hooked. The more they used, the more their body craved, and the withdrawal symptoms were very intense.

After a few months, Jeff and Wendy could no longer afford their habit. Heroin was just too expensive. One day, Jeff told Wendy to meet him in his barn. When Wendy got there, Jeff had already begun boiling codeine with a bunch of chemicals, like lighter fluid, cleaning supplies and paint thinner. He found out how to make a new drug called Krokodil on the internet, and heard it worked just as good as heroin. This went on for a while and the withdrawal symptoms from Krokodil were much more intense and painful than heroin. One day, Wendy started noticing the skin on her arm was falling off and her bone was exposed. It was so painful, she took another hit of Krokodil just to make the pain go away. Jeff was having similar side effects from the drug. It got so bad that Wendy’s arm was amputated. She eventually checked into a treatment facility and received the help she needed. Jeff wasn’t so lucky. Two years after his first hit of Krokodil, he died.

