



So You Suspect Drug, Alcohol or Tobacco Use

The Do's and Don'ts When Talking to Teens

Do:

- Choose a good time to talk.
- Share your feelings in a honest and calm way.
- Help them build their confidence and develop healthy ways of dealing with stress.
- Set clear rules about drug use – and make sure they understand what will happen to them if they break those rules.
- Monitor your teen's activities more closely.
- Consult a doctor or counselor if needed.

Don't:

- Don't lecture.
- Don't assume that one talk is enough.
- Don't wait until you catch your child using to think of a punishment. Set clear rules early on.

Do Something!

Things To Do Instead of Drugs

Most teens end up experimenting with drugs and alcohol because they feel they don't have anything better to do.

Suggest some fun, safe and legal things to do:

- Try out for a sports team.
- Take a dance class.
- Volunteer for a community organization.
- Audition for the school play.
- Play video games.
- Write poetry.
- Get a part-time job.
- Learn to play an instrument.
- Draw, paint, or sketch.

Refusal Tips for Kids

It's not always easy for a kid to keep their cool in the face of peer pressure. Give them a few suggestions on how to say "NO" like:

- "No thanks. That stuff can kill you."
- "No way. If I get caught with that stuff, I'll get kicked off the team."
- "My parents would kill me if they found out."
- "Nah. That's not my thing."

WARNING SIGNS OF DRUG, ALCOHOL & TOBACCO ABUSE



Common Warning Signs

Changes at Home

- Avoids eye contact
- Wanting more privacy, locking doors, etc.
- Sneaking out at night
- Stealing money or valuables from parents or siblings
- Missing prescription medications
- Lacks motivation



Behavioral Changes

- Mood swings and irritability
- Unexplained outbursts
- Unusual hyperactivity
- Unwarranted paranoia
- Appears depressed or withdrawn
- Appears confused or disoriented



Changes at School

- Missing school or skipping classes
- Drop in grades and performance
- Getting into trouble/fights
- Loss of interest in extracurricular activities



Changes in Appearance

- Dilated pupils or bloodshot eyes
- Circles or bags under eyes
- Slurred speech
- Sudden weight gain or loss
- Odor on breath (Tobacco/Alcohol)
- Poor coordination or clumsiness
- Stained teeth
- Change in grooming habits



Physical Evidence of Use

- Drug paraphernalia
- Smell of tobacco, alcohol or marijuana on clothing or breath
- Cigarette lighters or straws
- Small bags with white powder or green herbs



Frequently Abused Drugs – Signs & Dangers of Abuse

TYPES OF DRUGS	SIGNS OF ABUSE
Tobacco Cigarettes, Cigars, Chewing Tobacco, Snuff, Snus	Smoke smell in clothing or hair; Started using mouthwash, breath mints or gum more often; Burnt holes in clothing; Yellow-stained teeth and fingers; Bleeding gums; Mouth sores
Alcohol Beer, Liquor (like whiskey, vodka, rum, gin, tequila, etc.), Wine	Poor concentration; Headaches, nausea and sensitivity to sound; Slurred Speech; Red/blood shot eyes; Fatigue and sleep problems; Repeatedly neglecting responsibilities
Cannabinoids Hashish, Marijuana	Dilated pupils; Bloodshot eyes; Sleepy appearance; Lack of motivation; Overeating/weight gain; Smell on clothing, room or car
Depressants Alcohol, Benzodiazepines, Barbiturates, Rohypnol, GHB	Odor on breath (Alcohol); Confusion; Poor coordination (stumbling); Slurred speech; Dilated pupils
Inhalants Adhesives, Solvents, Aerosol Sprays, Medical Gases, Nitrous Oxide	Drunk, dazed, or dizzy appearance; Slurred speech; Red or runny eyes and nose; Spots and/or sores around the mouth; Nausea and/or loss of appetite; Paint around the nose or mouth area; Unusual breath odor; Chemical odor on clothing
Hallucinogens Ketamine, LSD, Mescaline/Peyote, PCP (Phencyclidine), Angel Trumpets, Salvia Divinorum, Psilocybin/Psilocyn Mushrooms	Confusion; Extreme mood changes; Disorientation; Extreme fear or terror; Loss of appetite and weight loss; Bluish lips & skin; Extreme sweating
Anabolic Steroids Anadrol, Depo-Testosterone, Equipoise and others	Extreme weight or muscle gain; Unusually greasy hair and skin; Severe acne, often on shoulders and back; Thinning hair or receding hairline; Extreme mood swings and aggressiveness; Bad breath
Stimulants Cocaine/Crack, Amphetamines, Methamphetamine, MDMA, Nicotine, Ritalin	Bad smell on hair, clothes and breath; Excessive energy or activity; Extreme irritability or nervousness; Moodiness; Extreme fear and panic attacks
Narcotics/Opiates Heroin, Morphine, Prescription Pain Relievers, Opioids, Analgesics	Drowsiness; Slurred speech; Track marks; Red/raw nose; Confusion/lack of concentration
Over the Counter Drugs DXM (Dextromethoraphan), Meclizine, Caffeine Pills	Poor memory or coordination; Sleeplessness; Nausea; Confusion; Blackouts; Missing medicines or pills