

WHAT'S IN THE POWDER?

FACT SHEET

A number of different types of drugs come in white powder form. When buying illicit white powders you can never be fully sure of the contents. Generally white powders are uppers (stimulant), downers (sedative) or trippy (hallucinogen).

Some examples of substances that come in white powder are, **stimulants**: cocaine, amphetamine, MDMA, mephadrone; **sedatives**: ketamine, GHB, PCP; **hallucinogens**: 2C-B; N-Bomb; Alpha-Methyltryptamine.

It is always safest not to take unknown or illicit drugs at all.

If you do decide to take powders.

- IT IS LESS RISKY TO START WITH A SMALL TEST DOSE TO SEE WHAT EFFECT THE DRUG HAS ON YOU. HOWEVER, YOU CANNOT REMOVE THE RISK ENTIRELY, SMALL DOSES CAN ALSO BE DANGEROUS.
- NOT ALL POWDERS ARE SUITABLE FOR SNORTING. PLAN HOW YOU WILL TAKE YOUR POWDER IN ADVANCE.
- WAIT 2 HOURS. SOME DRUGS TAKE LONGER TO TAKE EFFECT THAN OTHERS.
- USE YOUR OWN TOOTER. SNIFFING OFF UNCLEAN SURFACES SUCH AS TOILET SEATS/PHONES AND SHARING YOUR TOOTER INCREASES THE RISK OF GETTING INFECTIONS INCLUDING BLOOD-BORNE VIRUSES.
- RINSE OUT YOUR NOSE WITH WATER AFTERWARDS. SOME POWDERS CLUMP IN THE NOSE AND DRIP DOWN THE THROAT. KETAMINE IN PARTICULAR CAN CAUSE HARM TO YOUR STOMACH.
- REHYDRATE WITH WATER OR ISOTONIC DRINKS REGULARLY, BUT DON'T GO OVER A PINT PER HOUR. IF DANCING, TAKE REGULAR BREAKS.
- AVOID MIXING WITH OTHER DRUGS INCLUDING ALCOHOL AND PRESCRIPTION MEDICATION. MIXING DRUGS CAN BE UNPREDICTABLE AND MAY PLACE GREATER STRAIN ON YOUR HEART OR OTHER INTERNAL ORGANS.
- USE IN A SAFE ENVIRONMENT. THE USE OF PSYCHOACTIVE SUBSTANCES IN CLUBS OR AT FESTIVALS CAN BE FRIGHTENING IF YOU BEGIN TRIPPING OR FALL INTO A K HOLE.
- SEEK HELP IF NEEDED AND BE HONEST WITH EMERGENCY SERVICES ABOUT WHAT YOU THINK YOU'VE TAKEN.
- GRIND POWDERS BEFORE SNORTING (SOME DRUGS MAY HAVE CRYSTALS OR CLUMPS IN THEM). IF YOU DON'T HAVE A METAL TOOTER, GET A CLEAN STRAW AND CUT IT IN HALF TO USE AS A TOOTER (PAPER, POST ITS AND PLAIN CARD CAN ALSO BE ROLLED UP AND USED).
- POSITION THE TOOTER AS HIGH UP YOUR NOSTRIL AS POSSIBLE TO AVOID DAMAGING THE SOFT TISSUE AT THE BOTTOM OF YOUR NOSE. ALTERNATE NOSTRILS TO GIVE EACH SIDE A BREAK.
- POWDERS CAN BE WRAPPED IN CIGARETTE PAPER OR INSERTED IN EMPTY TABLET CAPSULES AND DROPPED LIKE A PILL. IF DROPPING POWDERS, NEVER DOUBLE DROP. KETAMINE SHOULD NOT BE DROPPED AS IT CAN DAMAGE THE STOMACH.
- AVOID MIXING WITH OTHER DRUGS INCLUDING ALCOHOL AND PRESCRIPTION MEDICATION. WHEN POWDERS ARE USED IN COMBINATION WITH ALCOHOL, PEOPLE MAY BECOME PARANOID, AGGRESSIVE OR EXPERIENCE GREATER STRAINS ON THE HEART OR OTHER INTERNAL ORGANS.
- COCAINE AND ALCOHOL COMBINE TO PRODUCE COCAETHYLENE, WHICH INCREASES THE RISKS OF DAMAGE TO THE HEART OR HEART ATTACK.
- A HIGH DOSE OF KETAMINE CAN BE ASSOCIATED WITH WHAT IS KNOWN AS A K HOLE. THIS IS A FEELING OF INTENSE DETACHMENT FROM REALITY.
- IF YOU START TO FEEL EDGY TRY NOT TO FOCUS ON IT, REMIND YOURSELF THAT THESE FEELINGS WILL PASS. USE WHEN IN TRUSTED COMPANY AND TRY TO HAVE AT LEAST ONE PERSON WITH YOU WHO HASN'T USED DRUGS.

If you are concerned about a substance that you or a friend have taken

Don't take any more. Don't take other drugs. Seek medical advice.

For information and support on drugs and alcohol visit [drugs.ie](https://www.drugs.ie)

The HSE Drugs & Alcohol Helpline can be reached on [1800 459 459](tel:1800459459)