

Phencyclidine Fact Sheet

Common Names of Phencyclidine

- PCP, Angel dust, ozone , wack, rocket fuel
- Killer joints, crystal, supergrass (refer to PCP combined with marijuana)

Overview/Description

PCP (phencyclidine) was developed in the 1950s as an intravenous anesthetic.

- Its use in humans was discontinued in 1965, because patients often became agitated, delusional, and irrational while recovering from its anesthetic effects.
- Is illegally manufactured in laboratories and is sold on the street
- Is a "dissociative drug," meaning that it distorts perceptions of sight and sound and produces feelings of detachment (dissociation) from the environment and self.
- Is a white crystalline powder that is readily soluble in water or alcohol. It has a distinctive bitter chemical taste. Can be mixed easily with dyes and is available as an illicit drug in a variety of tablets, capsules, and colored powders.
- It is normally abused in one of three ways: snorted, smoked, or ingested. For smoking, PCP is often applied to a leafy material such as mint, parsley, oregano, or marijuana

Short-Term Effects

- Strength, power, invulnerability, and a numbing effect on the mind.
- Increase in breathing, blood pressure and pulse rate
- Shallow breathing, flushing and profuse sweating occur
- Generalized numbness of the extremities and loss of muscular coordination
- At high doses of PCP, blood pressure, pulse rate, and respiration drop.
- Nausea, vomiting, blurred vision, flicking up and down of the eyes, drooling, loss of balance, and dizziness.
- High doses can cause seizures, coma, and death
- High doses can cause symptoms that mimic schizophrenia, such as delusions, hallucinations, paranoia, disordered thinking, a sensation of distance from one's environment, and catatonia. Speech is often sparse and garbled

Long-Term Effects

People who abuse PCP for long periods report

- Memory loss, difficulties with speech and thinking,
- Depression, and weight loss.
- These symptoms can persist up to a year after stopping PCP abuse. Mood disorders also have been reported.

Dependence Potential

- Can develop tolerance (needing more of the drug in order to get the same effect)
- Physical dependence can develop as PCP physically affects the body, and the user feels that he or she cannot function without using the drug.
- Psychological dependence can develop as many people become addicted to the feelings of being invincible and other pleasurable feelings they get from the drug..

Withdrawal

Withdrawal symptoms may include:

- Hyperactivity, agitation, hyperarousal, irritability, anxiety, angry mood, violent behaviors, increased pain threshold, increased blood pressure and heart rate, dry skin, Depression, delusions, auditory and visual hallucinations, memory loss, suicidal thoughts,