



Healthy Spirit, Healthy Community

A guide to drugs &
alcohol within our
community



VACCHO



australian
drug FOUNDATION





Bunjil

My name's Kulan Barney.

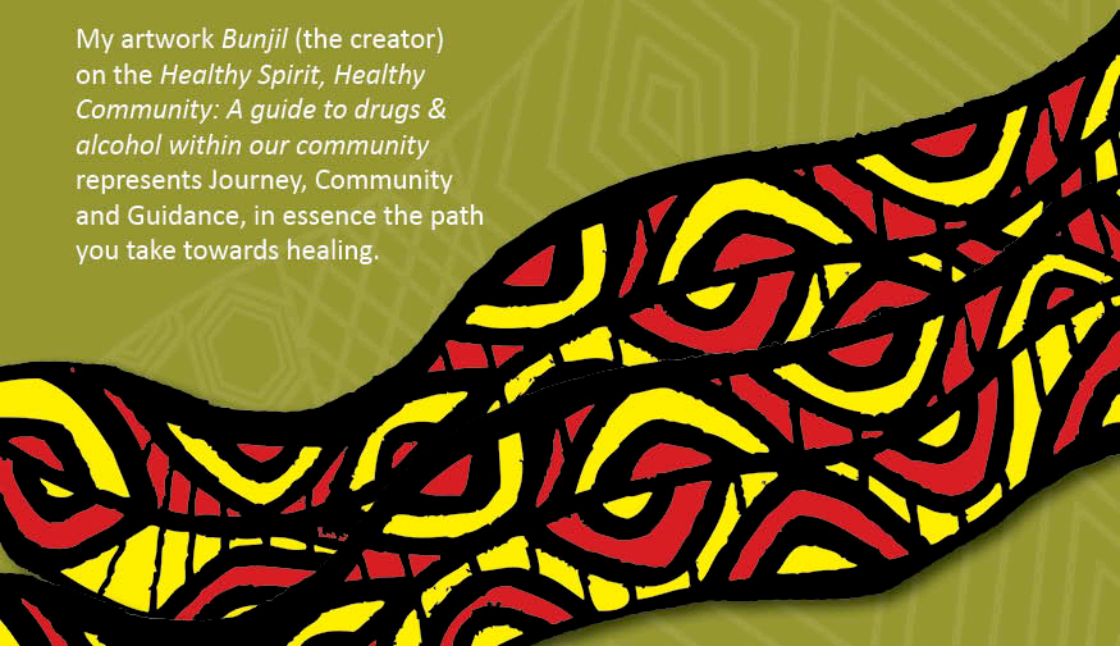
My family on my mother's side are Gunditjmara (hailing from the Western Districts, Heywood) and my father's mob are Bundjalung (from the coast of NSW).

I've been painting and drawing ever since I was a young kid and I derive my artistic influence from my dad's designs, mixed with contemporary aboriginal artists like Lin Onus.

My artwork *Bunjil* (the creator) on the *Healthy Spirit, Healthy Community: A guide to drugs & alcohol within our community* represents Journey, Community and Guidance, in essence the path you take towards healing.

The journey to recovery can be a long and difficult one. This is why as a Community we need to support our friends and family through this testing transition, as well as having workers there who understand what you're going through.

These workers can provide you with support and guidance and will keep you going in the right direction towards recovery.



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- Statewide Koori Alcohol and Drugs Workers
- Australian Drug Foundation
- Victorian Government

This resource has been developed in partnership between VACCHO, Victorian Koori Alcohol & Other Drugs Workers and the Australian Drug Foundation with support from the Victorian Government for the benefit of the Victorian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community.

In partnership with



**Healthy people.
Strong communities.**

With
support
through



Introduction

The background of the page features three large, stylized Aboriginal art motifs. These motifs are rendered in a light grey color with internal patterns of yellow, orange, and green. They resemble traditional Aboriginal designs such as sunbursts, waves, and human figures, arranged in a way that frames the central text.

Healthy Spirit, Healthy Community has been developed for health professionals and community members as an educational and informational resource.

How does it help?

The drugs in this resource are currently the most used in the Victorian Aboriginal community.

The information in this booklet is a guide only. If you or a family member/friend is experiencing any negative effects from alcohol or other drugs or have any questions or concerns, visit your local Aboriginal health service (contact details on page 54), other health worker or GP.



Alcohol

Alcohol is a depressant drug, which means it slows down the messages travelling between your brain and body.



Street names

Booze, grog, piss, liquor, charge, nip.

Effects of alcohol

Alcohol effects everyone differently, but you may experience:

- Feeling relaxed
- Trouble concentrating
- Slower reflexes
- Increased confidence
- Feeling happier or sadder, depending on your mood

If you have a lot, you may also experience:

- Confusion
- Blurred vision
- Clumsiness
- Offensive and violent behaviour
- Memory loss
- Nausea and vomiting
- Passing out
- Coma
- Death

In an emergency

Call triple zero (000) if someone looks like they've had too much alcohol and are in trouble. Passing out is a sign that someone may overdose and in extreme cases can lead to death. Ambulance officers don't have to involve the police.

While you wait for help to arrive:

- Stay with the person and keep crowds back
- Make sure they have enough air and loosen tight clothing
- If they lie down, put them on their side in case they vomit

Hangovers

If you drink a lot, the next day you may experience a hangover including:

- Headaches
- Diarrhoea and nausea
- Tiredness and trembling
- Increased heart rate and blood pressure
- Dry mouth and eyes
- Trouble concentrating
- Anxiety
- Restless sleep

Sobering up

To sober up takes time. The liver gets rid of about one standard drink an hour. (Standard drinks are demonstrated below and on the next page.) Sweating it out with exercise, cold showers, coffee, fresh air and/or vomiting will not speed up the process. They may make you feel better, but they don't get the alcohol out of your blood quicker. This means it may not be safe for you to drive or work the next day.

Standard drinks



1.4 standard drinks
375 ml bottle of
full strength beer
(4.8% alcohol)



7.5 standard drinks
750 ml bottle of wine
(12.5% alcohol)



22 standard drinks
700 ml bottle of spirits
(40.0% alcohol)



1.5 standard drinks
275 ml bottle of
ready-to-drink spirits/wine
(7.0% alcohol)



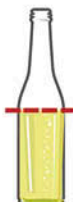
1 pot/middy/handle
of full strength beer
285 ml
(4.8% alcohol)



1 small glass of wine
100 ml
(12.5% alcohol)



1 "nip" of spirits
30 ml
(40.0% alcohol)



1/3 of a
275 ml bottle of
ready-to-drink spirits/wine
(7.0% alcohol)

Standard drinks

Light beer - 2.7% alcohol

- *One 375ml can or stubby equals 0.8 standard drink*

Mid strength beer - 3.5% alcohol

- *One 375ml can or stubby equals 1 standard drink*

Full strength beer - 4.8% alcohol

- *One 375ml can or stubby equals 1.4 standard drinks*

Wine - 12% to 13% alcohol

- *One 100ml serve equals 1 standard drink*
- *One 150ml (average pub) serve equals 1.5 standard drinks*
- *One 750ml bottle equals 7.5 standard drinks*

Spirits - 40% alcohol

- *One 30ml shot equals 1 standard drink*
- *One 700ml bottle equals 22 standard drinks*

Premixed spirits - 5% alcohol

- *One 375ml can or bottle equals 1.5 standard drinks*

If you are unsure how many standard drinks your drink contains check on the label or ask the bar tender. If you're at someone's house pour your own drinks.

Long term effects

If you drink a lot of alcohol regularly, it may eventually cause:

- Liver and/or brain damage
- High blood pressure
- Regular colds or flu
- Difficulty getting an erection (males)
- Depression
- Poor memory
- Low fertility (males and females)
- Cancer in many parts of the body
- Needing to drink more to get the same effect
- Relying on alcohol to feel good
- No money for food and bills
- Letting down your family and community

Mixing alcohol with other drugs

The effects of drinking and taking other drugs – including over-the-counter or prescribed medications – can be unpredictable and dangerous.

Alcohol + Cannabis = nausea, vomiting, panic, anxiety and paranoia.

Alcohol + Energy drinks (with caffeine), Ice, Speed or Ecstasy = more risky behaviour, body under great stress, overdose more likely.

Alcohol + GHB or Benzos = decreased heart rate, overdose more likely.

Responsible drinking

While there is no safe level of drinking, the National Health and Medical Research Council has developed a set of guidelines to help you drink responsibly. If you are healthy (and not pregnant or under 18), the guidelines recommend:

- No more than two standard drinks a day to reduce long term harm to your health.
- No more than four standard drinks on any one occasion (for example at a party) to avoid injuring yourself or other people.

If you are drinking, it's a good idea to:

- Drink low alcohol drinks
- Eat before and while you are drinking, but avoid salty snacks
- Pace yourself
- Alternate between alcoholic and non-alcoholic drinks
- Keep track of the number of standard drinks you've drunk
- Don't be pressured into drinking more than you want to
- Avoid sitting around and drinking for a long time – stay busy

Alcohol and the law

In Australia it's illegal to supply alcohol to anyone under the age of 18. If you are caught selling, supplying or buying alcohol for someone under 18 you may face legal action.

It is also illegal in Victoria to supply alcohol to someone who is under the age of 18 without their parent or guardian's permission – even if it's on private property including your home.

Alcohol and pregnancy

Drinking alcohol during pregnancy can be harmful to your baby, so the best option is not to drink.

If you drink while pregnant, it may cause:

- Miscarriage
- Stillbirth
- Premature birth

Alcohol may also cause your baby to be born with Foetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders (FASD).

This means your baby may be born with:

- Low birth weight
- Attention and/or learning difficulties
- Facial abnormalities
- Damaged heart, kidneys, and other organs

Not many babies in Australia are born with FASD, but there are more born to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people than non-Aboriginal Australians.

Giving up alcohol

If you want to give up alcohol, but have been drinking regularly for a long time, your body has to get used to working without it. This is why you may experience withdrawal symptoms. The symptoms usually start about four to twelve hours after the last drink and can last for about four to five days.

Symptoms include:

- Sweating
- Tremors
- Nausea
- Anxiety
- Seizures or fits

It's important to ask for medical help to get you through withdrawal safely.

If you, a family member, or a friend want 'Help and support' turn to page 54.



Yarndi

Yarndi is the Koori word for cannabis. It's a depressant drug, which means it slows down messages travelling between your brain and body.



Street names

Marijuana, pot, weed, hash, dope, gunja, joint, stick, Kronic (synthetic form), cone, choof.

How is yarndi used?

Yarndi is usually smoked or eaten and comes in three different forms:

- **Marijuana** - the dried plant that is smoked in a joint or a bong. This is the most common form.
- **Hashish** - the dried plant resin that is usually mixed with tobacco and smoked or added to foods and baked; such as cookies and brownies.
- **Hash oil** - liquid that is usually added to the tip of a cigarette and smoked.

It takes about an hour to feel the effects of eating yarndi, which means it's easy to have too much. If it's smoked the effects are usually felt straight away. However, you can get more bad side-effects from smoking, especially later in life.

Yarndi can also come in synthetic form, which may be more harmful than real yarndi. Read more about synthetic drugs on page 42.

Effects of yarndi

Yarndi affects everyone differently, but you may experience:

- Feeling relaxed and sleepy
- Spontaneous laughter and excitement
- Increased appetite
- Dry mouth
- Quiet and reflective moods

If you have a lot (or get a strong batch), you may also experience:

- Trouble concentrating
- Blurred vision
- Clumsiness
- Slower reflexes
- Bloodshot eyes
- Increased heart rate
- Low blood pressure
- Mild anxiety and paranoia

Long term effects

If you regularly use a lot of yarndi, it may eventually cause:

- Memory loss
- Learning difficulties
- Mood swings
- Regular colds or flu
- Reduced sex drive
- Low fertility (males and females)
- Needing to use more yarndi to get the same effect
- Relying on yarndi to feel good
- No money for food and bills
- Letting down your family and community

Smoking yarndi can also cause:

- A sore throat
- Asthma
- Bronchitis
- Cancer (if smoked with tobacco)

If you have a history of mental illness you are more likely to also experience anxiety, depression and psychotic symptoms. Psychotic symptoms include delusions and seeing or hearing things that do not exist or are distorted.

Mixing yarndi with other drugs

The effects of taking yarndi with other drugs – including over-the-counter or prescribed medications – can be unpredictable and dangerous.

Yarndi + Alcohol = nausea, vomiting, panic, anxiety and paranoia.

Yarndi is sometimes used to help with the ‘come down’ effects of stimulant drugs, such as ice, speed and ecstasy. However, doing this can cause reduced motivation, bad memory and mental health problems.

Giving up yarndi

If you want to give up yarndi, but have been using it regularly for a long time, your body has to get used to working without it. This is why you may experience withdrawal symptoms which may last for less than a week, but your sleep may be affected for longer.

Symptoms include:

- Anxiety
- Irritability
- Aggressive and angry behaviour
- Loss of appetite and upset stomach
- Sweating, chills and tremors
- Restless sleep and nightmares

If you, a family member, or a friend want 'Help and support' turn to page 54.

If you are pregnant yarndi can affect your baby – read about 'Pregnancy and breastfeeding' on page 51.

Possession, use and distribution of yarndi is illegal within Australia.





Ice & speed

Ice and speed are stimulant drugs, which mean they speed up the messages travelling between your brain and body. They are both made with methamphetamine, but ice is generally stronger, more addictive and has worse side effects than speed.



Street names

Ice: crystal meth, shabu, crystal, glass, shard, shardy party.

Speed: Goey, whiz, up, snow, go-go, Lou Reid, Louey.

How are they used?

Ice is generally smoked or injected and the effects can be felt immediately. It can also be swallowed or snorted – the effects take around 30 minutes to feel if it's used this way.

Speed is usually snorted and you can usually feel the effects within 30 minutes of taking it, or immediately if it's injected.

Effects of ice & speed

The effects of ice and speed can last around six hours, but it might be hard to sleep for a few days after using these drugs.

Drugs effect everyone differently, but you may experience:

- Happiness and confidence
- Talking more and feeling energetic
- Repeating simple things like itching and scratching
- Large pupils and dry mouth
- Fast heart beat and breathing
- Teeth grinding
- Reduced appetite
- Excessive sweating
- Increased sex drive

Because it can be hard to sleep for a few days after taking ice or speed they can also cause:

- Headaches
- Dizziness and blurred vision
- Paranoia, hallucinations and confusion
- Irritability and violence

If you have a lot (or get a strong batch), it could also cause:

- A racing heart beat
- Fits
- Passing out
- A stroke, heart attack and death

'Ice psychosis' is caused by high doses and frequent heavy use. It is characterised by paranoid delusions, hallucinations and bizarre, aggressive or violent behaviour. These symptoms usually disappear a few days after the person stops using ice.

Injecting ice or speed and sharing needles may also cause:

- Hepatitis B
- Hepatitis C
- HIV/AIDS
- Tetanus

Read about how to prevent catching these viruses on page 48.

If you snort ice or speed it can damage your nasal passage and cause nose bleeds.

In an emergency

Call triple zero (000) if someone looks like they've had ice or speed and are in trouble. Ambulance officers don't have to involve the police.

While you wait for help to arrive:

- Stay with the person and keep crowds back
- Make sure they have enough air and loosen tight clothing
- If they lie down, put them on their side in case they vomit

Coming down

In the following four to six days after using ice or speed, you may experience:

- Restless sleep and exhaustion
- Irritability, mood swings and depression

If you use a depressant drug such as alcohol, benzos or yarrdi to help with these 'come down' effects, you may become trapped in a vicious cycle where you are addicted to both types of drugs.

If you regularly use a lot of ice or speed, it may eventually cause:

- Reduced appetite and extreme weight loss
- Restless sleep
- Dry mouth and dental problems
- Regular colds or flu
- Trouble concentrating
- Breathlessness
- Muscle stiffness
- Anxiety, paranoia and violence
- Depression
- Heart and kidney problems
- Increased risk of stroke
- Needing to use more to get the same effect
- Relying on drugs to feel good
- No money for food and bills
- Letting down your family and community

Mixing ice or speed with other drugs

The effects of taking ice or speed with other drugs – including over-the-counter or prescribed medications – can be unpredictable and dangerous.

Ice + Speed or Ecstasy = enormous strain on the heart and other parts of the body, which can lead to stroke.

Ice or Speed + Alcohol, Yarni or Benzos = enormous strain on the body and more likely to overdose.

Giving up

If you want to give up ice or speed, but have been using it regularly for a long time, your body has to get used to working without it. This is why you may experience withdrawal symptoms, which should settle down after a week and will mostly disappear after a month.

Symptoms include:

- Cravings for ice or speed
- Increased appetite
- Confusion and irritability
- Aches and pains

- Exhaustion
- Restless sleep and nightmares
- Anxiety, depression and paranoia

If you, a family member, or a friend want 'Help and support' turn to page 54.

If you are pregnant ice and speed can affect your baby – read about 'Pregnancy and breastfeeding' on page 51.

Possession, use and distribution of ice and speed is illegal within Australia.

Ecstasy

Ecstasy is a stimulant drug, which means it speeds up the messages travelling between your brain and body.

Ecstasy contains the drug MDMA. However, many pills sold as ecstasy only have a small amount of MDMA or none at all. Other drugs and 'fillers' like household cleaning products are often used instead. This makes it hard to know how you'll react after taking ecstasy and how bad the side effects will be.



Street names

Eckies, E, XTC, pills, pingers, bikkies, flippers.

How is ecstasy used?

Ecstasy comes in a tablet form and is usually swallowed. The pills come in different colours and sizes and are often imprinted with a picture or symbol.

Effects of ecstasy

The effects of ecstasy are usually felt about 20 minutes to an hour after it's taken and last for around six hours.

Ecstasy affects everyone differently, but you may experience:

- Feeling happy, energetic and confident
- Large pupils
- Jaw clenching and teeth grinding
- Heightened senses (sight, hearing and touch)
- Excessive sweating and skin tingles
- Muscle aches and pains
- Nausea and reduced appetite
- A fast heart beat
- Dehydration
- Heat stroke
- Drinking extreme amounts of water (can cause death)

If you have a lot (or get a strong batch), you may also experience:

- Floating sensations
- Hallucinations
- Out-of-character irrational behaviour
- Anxiety
- Irritability, paranoia and violence
- Vomiting
- High body temperature
- A racing heart beat
- Fitting

If an ecstasy pill contains a new synthetic drug (see page 42) then it may cause more serious side effects including death.

In an emergency

Call triple zero (000) if someone looks like they've had ecstasy and are in trouble. Ambulance officers don't have to involve the police. While you wait for help to arrive:

- Stay with the person, keep crowds back
- Keep them cool, but make sure they don't drink too much water
- If they lie down, put them on their side in case they vomit

Coming down

In the following four to six days after using ecstasy, you may experience:

- Restless sleep and exhaustion
- Anxiety, irritability and depression
- Difficulty concentrating

If you use a depressant drug such as alcohol, benzos or yarndi to help with these 'come down' effects, you may become trapped in a vicious cycle where you are addicted to both types of drugs.

Long term effects

If you regularly use a lot of ecstasy, it may eventually cause:

- Regular colds or flu
- Depression
- Needing to use more to get the same effect
- Relying on ecstasy to feel good
- No money for food and bills
- Letting down your family and community

Mixing ecstasy with other drugs

The effects of taking ecstasy with other drugs – including over-the-counter or prescribed medications – can be unpredictable and dangerous.

Ecstasy + Ice or Speed = enormous strain on the heart and other parts of the body, which can lead to stroke.

Ecstasy + Alcohol, Yarndi or Benzos = enormous strain on the body, and more likely to overdose.

Giving up ecstasy

If you want to give up ecstasy, but have been using it regularly for a long time, your body has to get used to working without it. This is why you may experience withdrawal symptoms, which should settle down after a week and will mostly disappear after a month.

Symptoms include:

- Cravings for ecstasy
- Aches and pains
- Exhaustion
- Restless sleep
- Agitation
- Trouble concentrating
- Anxiety and depression

If you, a family member, or a friend want 'Help and support' turn to page 54.

If you are pregnant ecstasy can affect your baby – read about 'Drugs and pregnancy' on page 51.

Possession, use and distribution of ecstasy is illegal within Australia.



Hallucinogens

Hallucinogens can make you see, hear, smell, feel or taste things that aren't really there or are different from how they are in reality.

Hallucinogens can be both man-made such as LSD, or can occur naturally such as magic mushrooms.



Street names

LSD (Lysergic acid diethylamide): acid, trips, tabs, microdots, dots.

Magic mushrooms: shrooms, mushies, blue meanies, golden tops, liberty caps.

Mescaline (peyote cactus): cactus, cactus buttons, cactus joint, mesc, mescal.

LSD

In its pure state, LSD is a white odourless powder. However, it usually comes in squares of gelatine or blotting paper that have been dipped or soaked in LSD. LSD is sometimes sold as a liquid, tablets or capsules.

LSD is usually swallowed, but it can also be sniffed, injected or smoked.

Magic mushrooms

There are many different types of magic mushrooms. The most common ones in Australia are called golden tops, blue meanies and liberty caps. Magic mushrooms look similar to poisonous mushrooms that can cause you to become very sick and die.

Magic mushrooms are usually sold as dried mushrooms, a powder or as capsules.

Mushrooms are often eaten fresh, cooked or brewed into a tea. They are sometimes mixed with tobacco or yarndi, and smoked.

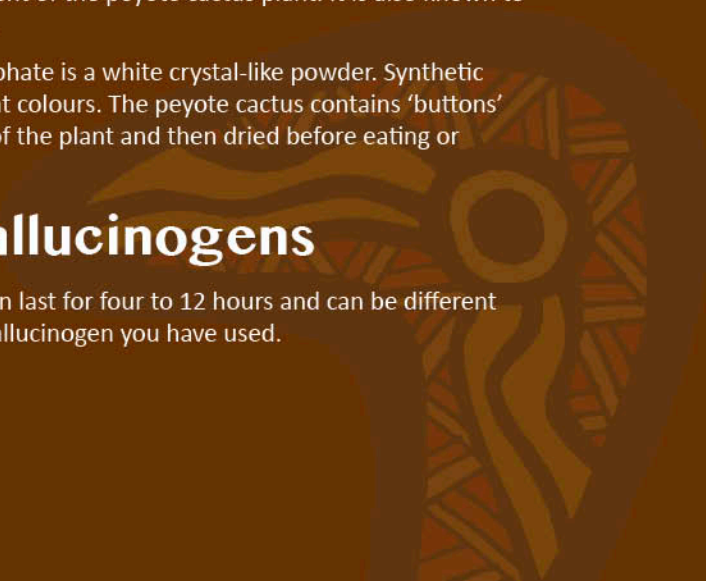
Mescaline (peyote cactus)

Mescaline is the active ingredient of the peyote cactus plant. It is also known to be made synthetically in a lab.

In its pure form, mescaline sulphate is a white crystal-like powder. Synthetic mescaline can come in different colours. The peyote cactus contains 'buttons' that can be cut from the root of the plant and then dried before eating or smoking them.

Effects of hallucinogens

The effects of hallucinogens can last for four to 12 hours and can be different depending on which type of hallucinogen you have used.



Hallucinogens also affect everyone differently, but you may experience:

- Feeling happy and relaxed
- Seeing and hearing things that aren't there
- Confusion and trouble concentrating
- Dizziness
- Blurred vision
- Clumsiness
- A fast or irregular heart beat
- Breathing quickly
- Vomiting
- Sweating and chills
- Numbness

Bad trips

Sometimes you can have a 'bad trip' and experience a scary or disturbing hallucination. This can lead you to panic and do risky things like run across a road or attempt suicide, even though what scared you isn't really there.

If you have a lot (or get a strong batch), you are more likely to experience the negative effects of hallucinogens.

In an emergency

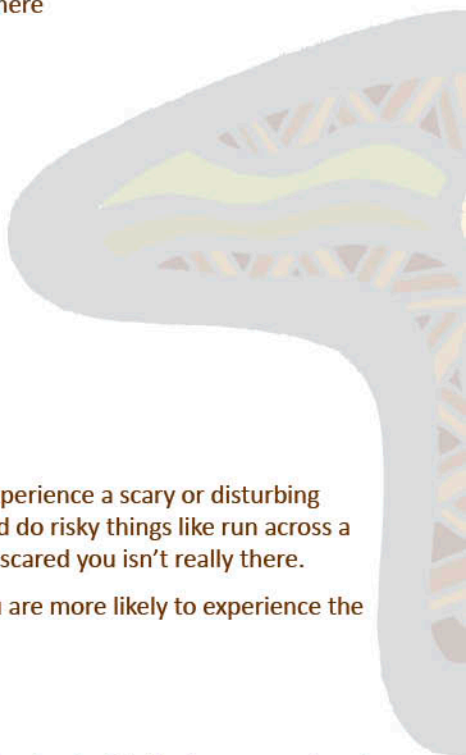
Call triple zero (000) if someone looks like they've had hallucinogens and are in trouble. Ambulance officers don't have to involve the police. While you wait for help to arrive:

- Stay with the person and try to keep them calm
- Make sure they have enough air and loosen tight clothing
- If they lie down, put them on their side in case they vomit

Coming down

In the following days after using hallucinogens, you may experience:

- Anxiety
- Panic attacks
- Depression



Long term effects

The most common long term effect of using hallucinogens are 'flashbacks'. Flashbacks are when you experience the drug's effects weeks, months or even years after you have taken the drug.

This can be disturbing because you aren't expecting the hallucination, especially when the hallucination scares you.

Flashbacks can be brought on by the use of other drugs, stress, fatigue or physical exercise.

Mixing hallucinogens with other drugs

The effects of taking hallucinogens with other drugs – including over-the-counter or prescribed medications – can be unpredictable and dangerous.

Hallucinogens + Ice, Speed or Ecstasy = enormous strain on the heart and body, which can lead to a stroke.

Hallucinogens + Alcohol, Yarni or Benzos = increased chance of risky behaviour and vomiting.

If you, a family member, or a friend want 'Help and support' turn to page 54.

If you are pregnant hallucinogens can affect your baby – read about 'Pregnancy and breastfeeding' on page 51.

Possession, use and distribution of hallucinogens is illegal within Australia.

Heroin

Heroin is a depressant drug, which means it slows down the messages travelling between your brain and body. Heroin belongs to a group of drugs known as 'opioids' that are made from the opium poppy.

Heroin comes in different forms, including:

- Fine white powder
- Coarse off-white granules
- Tiny pieces of light brown 'rock'



Street names

Smack, gear, hammer, the dragon, H, dope, junk, harry, horse, black tar, white dynamite, homebake, china white, Chinese H, poison, Dr Harry.

How is heroin used?

Heroin is usually injected into a vein, but it's also smoked ('chasing the dragon'), and added to cigarettes and yarndi. The effects are usually felt straight away. Heroin is also known to be snorted – the effects take around 10 to 15 minutes to feel if it's used in this way.

Effects of heroin

The effects of heroin usually last for three to five hours.

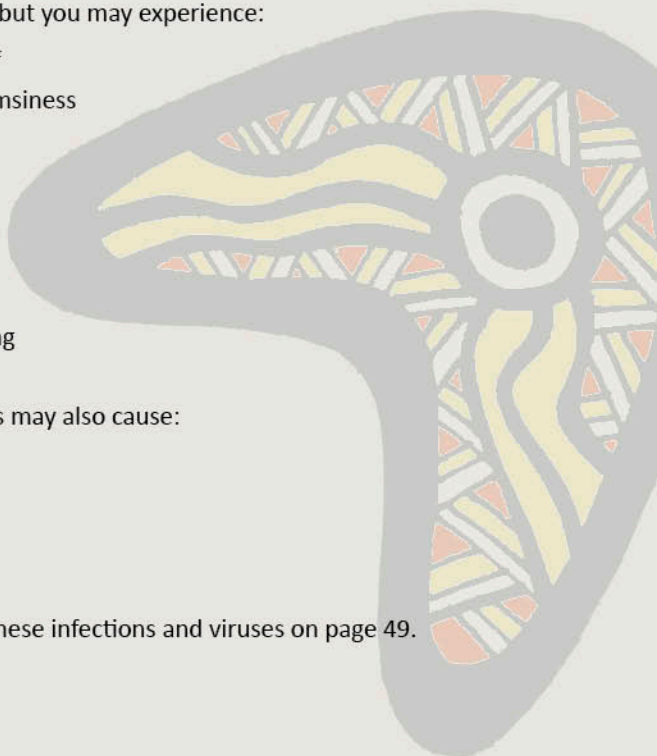
Heroin affects everyone differently, but you may experience:

- Intense pleasure and pain relief
- Relaxation, drowsiness and clumsiness
- Confusion
- Slurred and slow speech
- Slow breathing and heart beat
- Dry mouth
- Tiny pupils
- A reduced appetite and vomiting
- A decreased sex drive

Injecting heroin and sharing needles may also cause:

- Tetanus
- Hepatitis B
- Hepatitis C
- HIV/AIDS

Read about how to avoid catching these infections and viruses on page 49.



If you have a lot (or get a strong batch), you may also experience:

- Trouble concentrating
- Falling asleep ('going on the nod')
- Slow breathing
- An irregular heart beat
- Cold, clammy skin
- Itchiness
- Wanting to urinate but finding it hard to
- Passing out
- Death

In an emergency

Call triple zero (000) if someone looks like they've had heroin and are in trouble. Ambulance officers don't have to involve the police and can use the drug naloxone to reverse the effects of heroin. While you wait for help to arrive:

- Stay with the person and keep crowds back
- Make sure they have enough air and loosen tight clothing
- If they lie down, put them on their side in case they vomit

Coming down

In the following days after using heroin, you may experience:

- Irritability
- Depression

Long term effects

If you regularly use heroin, it may eventually cause:

- Intense sadness
- Irregular periods and difficulty having children (females)
- No sex drive (males)
- Constipation
- A damaged heart, lungs, liver and brain
- Vein damage and skin, heart and lung infections from injecting
- Needing to use more to get the same effect
- Relying on heroin to feel good
- No money for food and bills
- Letting down your family and community

Mixing heroin with other drugs

The effects of taking heroin with other drugs – including over-the-counter or prescribed medications – can be unpredictable and dangerous.

Heroin + Ice, Speed or Ecstasy = enormous strain on the heart and body, which can lead to stroke.

Heroin + Alcohol, Yarni or Benzos = enormous strain on the body, and more likely to overdose.

Giving up heroin

If you want to give up heroin, but have been using it for a long time, your body has to get used to functioning without it. This is why you may experience withdrawal symptoms. These symptoms usually start within six to 24 hours after the last dose and can last for about a week – days one to three will be the worst.

Symptoms include:

- Cravings for heroin
- Restlessness and irritability
- Depression and crying
- Diarrhoea
- Restless sleep and yawning
- Stomach and leg cramps
- Vomiting and no appetite
- Goose bumps
- Runny nose
- A fast heart beat

It's important to ask for medical help to get you through withdrawal safely.

If you, a family member, or a friend want 'Help and support' turn to page 54.

If you are pregnant, heroin can affect your baby – read about 'Pregnancy and breastfeeding' on page 51.

Possession, use and distribution of heroin is illegal within Australia.



Tobacco

The leaves in the tobacco plant contain nicotine which is a stimulant drug that speeds up the messages travelling between your brain and body. Tobacco is one of the most addictive drugs you can use.



Street names

Ciggies, darts, durries, rollies, smokes, fags, butts, cancer sticks.

Effects of tobacco

Tobacco affects everyone differently, but you may experience:

- Feeling more alert, happy and relaxed
- Bad breath
- Yellow finger tips
- Dizziness
- Reduced appetite
- Stomach cramps and vomiting
- Fast heart beat
- Tingling or numbness in fingers and toes
- Headaches
- Coughing

If you smoke a lot of tobacco, you may also experience:

- Confusion
- Feeling faint
- Seizures
- Fast breathing
- Respiratory arrest (stop breathing) and death

Long term effects

If you regularly smoke tobacco, it may cause:

- Shortness of breath
- Coughing fits, asthma and lung diseases
- Regular colds or flu
- Loss of taste and smell
- Yellow, rotting teeth
- Early wrinkles
- Back pain



- Mood swings
- Eye disease and hearing loss
- Stomach ulcers
- Low fertility (males and females)
- Irregular periods and early menopause (females)
- Difficulty getting an erection (males)
- Cancer (in many areas of the body)
- Strokes and brain damage
- Heart attack and heart disease
- Needing to smoke more to get the same effect
- Relying on smoking to feel good
- No money for food and bills
- Letting down your family and community

Passive smoking

Passive smoking is when you breathe in somebody else's cigarette smoke. Passive smoking can cause many of the health problems listed above. This is why it's important to smoke away from other people, especially babies and children who can get sick more easily than adults.

Mixing tobacco with other drugs

The effects of smoking with other drugs – including over-the-counter or prescribed medications – can be unpredictable and dangerous. The nicotine in tobacco can cause some prescription drugs to not work as well as they should. If you are taking the contraceptive pill, smoking increases the chances of blood clots and heart disease.

Giving up smoking

If you want to give up smoking, but have been doing it for a while, your body has to get used to working without it. This is why you may experience withdrawal symptoms, which should go away within a few days or weeks of quitting.

Symptoms include:

- Cravings for a cigarette
- Irritability, anxiety and depression
- Restless sleep
- Eating more and putting on weight
- Trouble concentrating
- Headaches
- Coughing and sore throat
- Aches and pains
- Upset stomach and bowels

You may still crave a cigarette for months and years after giving up so it's important to ask for help (turn to page 54). You can also contact your local Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation to speak to a doctor or Aboriginal Health Worker to find out what options you have available.

Statistics

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are more likely to smoke tobacco, with almost half being current smokers – more than double the rate of non-Aboriginal Australians.

Between 2002 and 2008, the proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who were current smokers decreased from 51 per cent to 47 per cent.

If you are pregnant smoking can affect your baby – read about 'Pregnancy and breastfeeding' on page 51.

Federal and state laws make it an offence to sell or supply tobacco products to people under 18 years of age. It is also illegal for anyone under 18 years to purchase tobacco products.

There are laws and regulations that restrict smoking in public areas such as shopping centres, cafes and workplaces. It's also illegal to smoke in cars with children.

Prescription and over-the-counter drugs

Prescription drugs are prescribed by doctors and available from chemists. Over-the-counter medicine (OTC) can be bought without a prescription. Even though these medicines are available in shops, they are still drugs and can cause bad side effects. It's important to always follow the instructions from your doctor, the pharmacist or on the packet.



Street names

Xanax: zannies, z-bar, benzos.

Oxycodone: oxies, hillbilly heroin, dope, 40s, 20, 80s.

Valium: blues, v's.

Ritalin: rid, vitamin R, ritties, rits.

How should they be used?

When taking these drugs it's important to follow the instructions, either from your doctor for prescription medicines or on the packet for OTC drugs. If you do have bad side effects from taking the drug, tell your doctor or chemist so they can give you a different drug or change how much you take to make sure you don't get sicker.

It's important to never take prescription medicines unless they have been prescribed specifically for you. A drug that might be OK for someone else might have a different effect on you and could make you sicker. That's why to get prescription medicine a doctor has to check you out and then monitor you. This is also why it's illegal to sell or give prescription medicine to someone else.

Abuse of prescription and OTC drugs

Some people use prescription and OTC drugs to get 'high', help with the 'come down' of other drugs, or continue taking them after their prescription has finished because they are addicted.

Many prescription and OTC drugs are addictive and using them regularly increases your chances of becoming dependent on them. Addiction can cause:

- Needing to use more to get the same effect
- Relying on drugs to feel good
- No money for food and bills
- Letting down your family and community

Some of the most common prescription and OTC drugs that are misused are:

Examples include:

- Morphine (MS Contin)
- Oxycodone (OxyContin)
- Codeine (Panadeine Forte)

Opioids affect everyone differently, but you may experience:

- Drowsiness
- Constipation
- Nausea
- Dry mouth
- Itching
- Slow breathing
- Unconsciousness, coma and death

Depressants (‘downers’)

Benzodiazepines are usually used to treat anxiety, panic attacks and/or sleep problems and include:

- Diazepam (Valium)
- Temazepam (Temtabs)
- Alprazolam (Xanax)

Antipsychotics are usually used to manage mental health conditions and include:

- Zyprexa
- Seroquel

Depressants affect everyone differently, but you may experience:

- Feeling happy and sleepy
- Confusion and trouble concentrating
- Clumsiness and feeling dizzy
- Seeing and hearing things that aren't there
- Slurred speech
- Headaches
- Depression
- Coma and death

Stimulants ('uppers')

Stimulants are often used to treat attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) or narcolepsy and include:

- Methylphenidate (Ritalin)
- Dexamphetamine

Stimulants affect everyone differently, but you may experience:

- Happiness and confidence
- Talking more and feeling energetic
- Fast heart beat and breathing
- Reduced appetite and stomach pain
- Headaches
- Dizziness and blurred vision
- Paranoia, hallucinations and confusion
- Irritability and violence
- Passing out

Cough and cold medicines

Cough and cold medicines often contain dextromethorphan (DXM) that some people take in high doses to get 'high', which may also cause:

- Nausea
- Diarrhoea
- Vomiting
- Allergic reactions
- Hot flushes
- Dizziness
- Hallucinations
- Psychotic episodes
- Psychological addiction and depression
- Brain damage



Mixing drugs

The effects of taking different drugs at the same time can be unpredictable and dangerous. It's always best not to mix any drugs unless told otherwise by your doctor.

In an emergency

Call triple zero (000) if someone looks like they've had prescription or OTC drugs and are in trouble. Ambulance officers don't have to involve the police. While you wait for help to arrive:

- Stay with them
- Make sure they have enough air and loosen tight clothing
- If they lie down, put them on their side in case they vomit

Giving up

If you want to give up drugs, but have been using them for a long time, your body has to get used to functioning without them. This is why you may experience withdrawal symptoms, which can last for around a week. It's important to ask for medical help to get you through withdrawal safely.

If you, a family member, or a friend want 'Help and support' turn to page 54.

If you are pregnant taking drugs can affect your baby – read about 'Pregnancy and breastfeeding' on page 51.

It's illegal to sell or give prescription medicine to someone else.



Synthetic drugs

Synthetic drugs is a general term for drugs that are designed to produce similar effects to illegal drugs such as yarrdi, cocaine and ecstasy.

Manufacturers of these drugs use new chemicals to replace those that are banned. They are constantly changing the chemical structure of the drugs to stay ahead of the law.



Other names

Synthetic drugs are also called synthetic cannabis, synthetic yarrdi, legal highs, herbal highs, party pills, synthetic cocaine, herbal ecstasy, new psychoactive substances, bath salts, plant fertiliser, herbal incense and research chemicals. These products can sometimes be marked 'not for human consumption'.

Are they legal?

Synthetic drugs are often advertised as legal, but the laws are constantly changing as the government cracks down on these new drugs. So a drug that could be legal today may be illegal tomorrow.

Are they safe?

Just because these drugs are often advertised as legal and sold in shops doesn't mean they are safe. They can actually have more serious and unpredictable side effects than regular drugs like yarrdi.

The ingredients in synthetic drugs are constantly changing to stay ahead of the law. This means it's easy to receive a very different product from batch to batch, even if the packaging and name are the same. So you might have a good experience with a drug once, but the next batch you have might cause serious side effects.

If you, a family member, or a friend want 'Help and support' turn to page 54.

If you are pregnant, synthetic drugs can affect your baby – read about 'Pregnancy and breastfeeding' on page 51.



Ketamine

Ketamine hydrochloride is an anaesthetic used by vets and other medical professionals.

It is sometimes used illegally by people to hallucinate – which causes them to see, hear, smell, taste and feel things that aren't there or different to how they really are.

When it's sold illegally, ketamine usually comes as a white crystalline powder. It can also be made into tablets and pills, or dissolved in a liquid.



Street names

Special K, K, ket, kitkat, super k, horse trunk.

How is it used?

Ketamine can be swallowed, snorted or injected. It is also sometimes smoked with yarndi or tobacco.

Effects

Ketamine affects everyone differently, but you may experience:

- Feeling happy and relaxed
- Feeling detached from your body ('falling into a k-hole')
- Hallucinations
- Confusion and clumsiness
- Slurred speech and blurred vision
- Anxiety, panic and violence
- Vomiting
- Less likely to feel pain
- Difficulty moving
- A coma and 'near death' experiences

Using ketamine regularly can also cause serious bladder problems and difficulty holding in urine.

If you, a family member, or a friend want 'Help and support' turn to page 54.

If you are pregnant, ketamine can affect your baby – read about 'Pregnancy and breastfeeding' on page 51.

Legally produced ketamine is a restricted substance and only a doctor or vet may prescribe or administer it. All other ketamine is illegal in Australia.



GHB

GHB (gamma hydroxybutyrate) is a depressant drug that slows down the messages travelling between your brain and your body.

GHB usually comes as a colourless, odourless, bitter or salty liquid, which is usually sold in small bottles or vials. It can also come as a bright blue liquid known as 'blue nitro', and less commonly as a crystal powder.



Street names

G, fantasy, grievous bodily harm (GBH), liquid ecstasy, liquid E, liquid X, Georgia Home Boy, soap, scoop, cherry meth, blue nitro.

How is it used?

GHB is usually swallowed, but sometimes it's injected.

Effects

GHB affects everyone differently. You may experience feeling relaxed and more sociable, and lose your inhibitions ('let loose').

It is very easy to take too much GHB because there isn't much difference between the amount you need to get 'high' and the amount that causes an overdose. If GHB is taken with other depressant drugs such as benzos or alcohol, the chances of overdosing are increased.

If you overdose you may experience:

- Vomiting
- Sweating
- Irregular or shallow breathing
- Confusion, irritation and agitation
- Hallucinations
- Blackouts and memory loss
- Unconsciousness that can last for three to four hours
- Seizures
- Death

In an emergency

Call triple zero (000) if someone looks like they've had GHB and are in trouble. Ambulance officers don't have to involve the police. While you wait for help to arrive:

- Stay with the person and keep crowds back
- Make sure they have enough air and loosen tight clothing
- If they lie down, put them on their side in case they vomit

If you, a family member, or a friend want 'Help and support' turn to page 54.

If you are pregnant, GHB can affect your baby – read about 'Pregnancy and breastfeeding' on page 51.

Possession, use and distribution of GHB is illegal within Australia.

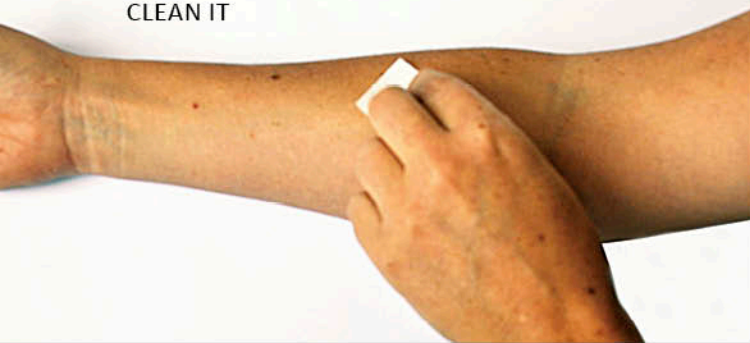


Reducing the risk of drugs

To stay healthy and strong it's always best not to take drugs. Drugs are addictive and once you start taking them it can be difficult to control your behaviour.

If you are going to take drugs there are a number of things you can do to reduce the risks of getting sick, having an accident or overdosing.

CLEAN IT



BIN IT



DON'T SHARE IT



ALWAYS USE YOUR OWN OR NEW EQUIPMENT

Injecting drugs

If you inject drugs you can catch viruses like hepatitis and HIV, so it's important that you:

- Use new injecting equipment (needles, syringes, filters, swabs, spoons, tourniquets etc) every time you inject.
- Don't share injecting equipment with anyone (this includes partners).
- Use warm soapy water or swabs to get rid of any blood or dirt on your hands before injecting. If using a swab, wipe in one direction so you don't just move the blood and dirt around.
- Dispose of all your used injecting material, swabs and wrappers in a 'sharps safe' bin, which can often be found in public toilets.
- If you are injecting pills or capsules use a wheel filter.

Call DirectLine (details on page 57) for information on where clean injecting equipment can be found.

Smoking drugs

- Smoke outside and away from other people, especially from babies and children.
- If you're smoking yarndi try smoking joints rather than bongs or pipes.
- If you do use a bong, don't use one made of a plastic bottle, rubber hose or with an aluminium cone because they can give off harmful fumes.
- Keep your bong clean and change the water frequently – a dirty bong can have germs and viruses like Hepatitis A.
- If you use a pipe, it's best to choose one made of glass, stainless steel or brass. Wooden or plastic pipes can give off harmful fumes.

Preventing overdose

- If possible use drugs in the company of others. If an overdose does occur someone is on hand to call triple zero (000) for emergency assistance.
- Always start with a small test amount (like half a pill) and wait two hours before taking any more. This is to make sure it doesn't have a bad effect on you and to help you decide how much to take.
- Avoid using any drug if you are not well or have a health condition.
- Don't mix drugs because the effects can be more unpredictable and dangerous. This includes mixing alcohol with prescription drugs.

- Stay hydrated by drinking small sips of water, but don't drink more than 250ml in an hour. This is especially important when taking ecstasy as drinking too much water may lead to death.
- If you are using stimulants (like ecstasy, speed or ice) take regular breaks from physical exercise like dancing.
- If you or anyone you know uses heroin or any other opiates, it's a good idea to have naloxone on hand. This is because if someone overdoses you can inject them with naloxone straight away to reverse the overdose. It's important to still call an ambulance by dialling triple zero (000). Naloxone is available through a prescription from a GP. To learn more about naloxone contact Harm Reduction Victoria T: 03 9329 1500 or speak to your GP.
- Always call an ambulance by dialling triple zero (000) if someone looks like they are in trouble. Ambulance officers don't have to involve the police.
- To make it easier for the ambulance officers to help you if you do overdose, make sure someone knows what you've had and how much. (If no one is around write it down somewhere).

Avoiding accidents

It's easy for accidents to happen when you've taken drugs, so it's important to:

- Not drive or operate machinery
- Look after your mates and help them make good decisions
- Plan to not be under the influence, hung over or 'coming down' from drugs when you're at work
- Always have a condom and lube available as some drugs can increase your sex drive

Staying healthy

It's easy for you to become 'run down' and sick when you use drugs, so it's important to:

- Try not to use drugs regularly and only use a small amount
- Eat a balanced diet including fruit and vegetables (even if you don't feel hungry)
- Get enough rest (even if you're not tired)
- Remember to brush and floss your teeth regularly

There is no safe level of drug use.

Pregnancy & breastfeeding

Having a baby is a time of great change. If you are thinking about having a baby, pregnant or breastfeeding, it's important to consider the types of drugs you might be taking and how they could affect your baby. This is important because alcohol and other drugs you take will reach your baby while you are pregnant and breastfeeding.



What drugs are harmful?

Drugs that may be harmful during pregnancy and while breastfeeding include:

- Legal drugs such as alcohol, tobacco and caffeine
- Complementary medicines such as herbal preparations and nutritional supplements
- Over-the-counter medicines such as antacids, cold and flu medicines, diet pills, laxatives and painkillers
- Prescribed medicines such as painkillers, tranquillisers and sleeping pills
- Illegal drugs such as yarrdi, ice, speed, ecstasy, GHB, ketamine, hallucinogens and heroin
- Drugs used to treat opiate or alcohol dependence such as methadone, buprenorphine and naltrexone
- Other substances such as glues and aerosols (inhalants or volatile substances)

Talk to your GP, pharmacist or other health professional about any prescription, over-the-counter or complimentary medicines you are taking to ensure they are safe during pregnancy.

How can drugs affect my baby?

If you drink alcohol, use tobacco or take any other drugs not approved by your GP or other health practitioner during pregnancy it may cause:

- Miscarriage
- Going into labour early

Using alcohol and drugs while you are pregnant or breastfeeding may also cause your baby to suffer from:

- Low birth weight
- Drug addiction in the baby
- Sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS)
- Attention and/or learning difficulties
- Facial abnormalities
- Damaged organs and limbs

Help and support

To make sure you give your baby the best start in life, try to give up alcohol and other drugs while you are trying to get pregnant, pregnant and breastfeeding. This can be difficult, especially if you have been drinking or taking drugs for a long time. It is recommended you try hard to give up because the consequence on your baby may be serious. There is support available to help you get through this challenging time. Talk with your local Aboriginal health worker (see page 54), other health professional or GP about how they can help you.



Help & support

For information on where to get help and support contact your local Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation or any other alcohol and drug service listed in this section.



Metro

Dandenong & District Aboriginies Co-operative Ltd

3 Carroll Avenue, Dandenong 3175
Tel: 03 9794 5933

Ngwala Willumbong Co-operative Ltd – Head office

93 Wellington Street, St Kilda 3182
Tel: 03 9510 3233

Victorian Aboriginal Health Service – Family Counselling Unit

238-250 Plenty Road, Preston 3072
Tel: 03 9403 3300

Hume Region

Albury Wodonga Aboriginal Health Service

644 Daniel Street, Glenroy 2640
Tel: 02 6040 1200
Freecall: 1800 421 640

Mungabareena Aboriginal Corporation

21 Hovell Street, Wodonga 3690
Tel: 02 6024 7599

Rumbalara Aboriginal Co-operative Ltd – Guawa Place

69-71 Numurkah Rd
Shepparton 3630
Tel: 03 5820 0092

Gippsland Region

Gippsland & East Gippsland Aboriginal Co-operative (GEGAC)

37-53 Dalmahoy Street
Bairnsdale 3875
Tel: 03 5150 0761

Lake Tyers Health & Children's Service

Rules Road, Lake Tyers 3887
Tel: 03 5155 8500

Lakes Entrance Aboriginal Health Association

18-26 Jemmeson Street
Lakes Entrance 3909
Tel: 03 5155 8300

Moogji Aboriginal Council East Gippsland Inc.

52 Stanley Street, Orbost 3888
Tel: 03 5154 2133

Ramahyuck District Aboriginal Corporation

117 Foster Street, Sale 3850
Tel: 03 5143 1644

Central Gippsland Aboriginal Health Services

7-9 Buckley Street, Morwell 3840
Tel: 03 5136 5100

Loddon Mallee Region

Mallee District Aboriginal Services - Mildura

120-122 Madden Avenue
Mildura 3502
Tel: 03 5022 1852

Murray Valley Aboriginal Co-operative

87 Latje Road, Robinvale 3549
Tel: 03 5026 3353

Mallee District Aboriginal Services - Kerang

9 Nolan Street, Kerang 3579
Tel: 03 5450 3019

Mallee District Aboriginal Services - Swan Hill

70 Nyah Road, Swan Hill 3585
Tel: 03 5032 8600

Njernda Aboriginal Corporation

84 Hare Street, Echuca 3564
Tel: 03 5480 6252

Bendigo & District Aboriginal Co-operative

13-15 Forrest Street, Bendigo 3550
Tel: 03 5442 4947

Grampians/ Barwon South West Region

Ballarat & District Aboriginal Co-operative

5 Market Street, Ballarat 3353
Tel: 03 5331 5344

Budja Budja Aboriginal Co-operative

20-22 Grampians Road
Halls Gap 3381
Tel: 03 5356 4751

Dhauwurd Wurrung Elderly and Community Health Service

18 Wellington Road, Portland 3305
Tel: 03 5521 7535

Goolum Goolum Aboriginal Co-operative

43 Hamilton Street, Horsham 3402
Tel: 03 5381 6333

Gunditjmara Aboriginal Co-operative Ltd

3 Banyan Street, Warrnambool 3280
Tel: 03 5564 3344

Wathaurong Aboriginal Co-operative

62 Morgan Street
North Geelong 3215
Tel: 03 5277 2038

Winda Mara Aboriginal Corporation

21 Scott Street, Heywood 3304
Tel: 03 5527 2051

Helplines

DirectLine

Tel: 1800 888 236

24 hours, 7 days a week

*Confidential AOD counselling and
referral line*

Family Drug Help

Tel: 1300 660 068

Monday to Friday 9am-9pm

Youth Support & Advocacy Service

Tel: 1800 014 446

24 hour toll free service

Service for people aged 12 – 21 years

Turning Point Alcohol and Drug Centre

Tel: 03 8413 8413

Victorian Aboriginal Legal Service

Freecall: 1800 064 865

Harm Reduction Victoria

Tel: 03 9329 1500

Australian Drug Foundation

Tel: 1300 85 85 84

www.druginfo.adf.org.au

Alcohol and drug information service

Notes

This image shows a full page of blank, lined paper. It features approximately 20 evenly spaced horizontal grey lines across its entire width, providing a guide for handwriting or typing. The paper itself is a clean, off-white color.



Bunjil (Eagle) and boomerang design, and tobacco, synthetic drugs, reducing the risk of drugs, pregnancy and breastfeeding and help and support images copyright ©Victorian Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation Inc, May 2014

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Healthy Spirit, Healthy Community

A guide to drugs & alcohol within our community

