



SOLVENTS & INHALANTS

Did you know?

That this seemingly "innocent" drug used mostly by young people is actually extremely dangerous? There is a fine line between inhaling enough solvent to obtain a high and inhaling too much and passing into unconsciousness. Users develop serious breathing problems with resulting damage to the brain and other body tissue. It is potentially lethal!

Signs of use

- Bloodshot eyes and dilated pupils.
- Headaches.
- Irritability and aggression.
- Mood swings, anxiety and depression.
- Hallucinations or changes in perception.
- Personality changes or behaviour that is out of character.
- Slurred speech and poor judgement.
- Disorientation and muscle weakness.
- Persistent runny nose, nosebleeds and impaired sense of smell.
- Rash around mouth and nose.
- Impaired hearing.
- Nausea and vomiting.
- Wheezing in the chest.
- Loss of appetite and weight loss.

Dangers with long-term or heavy use

Damage to the heart, liver, kidneys and lungs are common with long term abuse. There is also shortage in oxygen supply which can cause irreversible brain damage. The ensuing central nervous system damage can be serious enough to cause paralysis. Heart arrhythmia and heart stoppage are the most common causes of casualties associated with solvents. General body functions like breathing and heart rate are suppressed and there is a "stoned" feeling lasting from a few minutes to half an hour.

How it's used

An inhalant (glue, petrol, cleaning fluid, nail polish remover, paint, paint thinners, benzene, non-stick cooking spray or furniture polish) is inhaled directly from the container or poured onto a rag, handkerchief or shirt sleeve. It is placed over the nose and mouth and sniffed. Glue is squeezed into a plastic bottle or paper bag from where it is inhaled. Inhaled vapours are absorbed through the lungs and they pass rapidly through the blood to the brain causing a feeling of being high or "stoned".

Street names

Gases, aerosols, glue, thinners, volatile substances.

What it's like to be high

Inhalants are a central nervous system depressant which produce feelings similar to that of Alcohol use. Sensations vary according to the solvent used, but usually include feelings of euphoria, dizziness and loss of inhibitions. The resultant "high" is a feeling of "floating on a cloud". The effect is felt almost immediate after the solvent is sniffed and lasts for 15 to 45 minutes depending on the specific substance used.

Paraphernalia (Drug using tools)

- Solvent soaked rags.
- Plastic bottles and paper bags smelling of solvents.
- Disappearance of household products.
- Stains or hardened glue on clothes.
- Strong smell of solvents on breath or clothes.

Who is at risk?

It is a myth that only street children abuse inhalants. It is a problem in all schools, in part because inhalants are readily available and are inexpensive. Using inhalants is a way of escaping negative feelings for a few hours. For street children, it makes going without food, sleeping on the streets and unmet emotional needs, become bearable - but it never solve those problems. Adults can also inhale solvents to get a feeling of being stoned and the risks are the same irrespective of age.

Treatment

There is always hope if you struggle with addiction.

Please contact Elim Clinic on 011 975 2951 or on marketing@elimclin.co.za to find out more about treatment. You can also visit our website on www.elimclin.co.za for more information.



 +27 (0)11 975 2951
 +27 (0)11 970 2720
 info@elimclin.co.za
 www.elimclin.co.za