

alcohol, drugs and risk.

Drugs are also known as “substances” and substances can be a broad range of things affecting our body and brain

If you experiment with alcohol or drugs be informed!
Even if you are “experienced” act to minimise your risk

What are you taking?
How much are you taking?
Who will you call if the effects are not what you are expecting?

If you or your friend becomes impulsive, angry, depressed or acting dangerously, act to stay safe or keep your friend safe

Ask how they feel – Are you suicidal?
Remove yourself/them from the situation and go to a safe place

Call someone you trust—get help

Call 000 if there is immediate risk
Go to your closest Emergency Dept

Information & Advice

Alcohol & Drug Information
Service (02) 9361 8000

Your Room
www.yourroom.com.au

Drug & Alcohol Multicultural
Education Centre
www.ahmrc.org.au/members

eheadspace
www.eheadspace.org.au

Poisons Information Hotline
13 11 26

Smart Recovery
www.smartrecoveryaustralia.com.au

National Cannabis Info & Helpline
1800 30 40 50

Kids Helpline
www.kidshelp.com.au
1800 55 1800

alcohol, drugs & suicide.

Suicide risk and substances

People often start drinking alcohol or using different substances to feel different, to relate to their friends or to have fun

Sometimes though, substance use may have unexpected consequences, for example:

You do something you didn't want to do making you feel guilty, ashamed, embarrassed or sad

You might hurt people because of your use through being dishonest, lying, behaving badly or stealing

You could get physically, sexually or emotionally hurt when intoxicated or under the influence

You fail to meet major obligations or responsibilities; school, work, family, socially and financially

It is also hard to change how we feel when we are also responding to chemical processes in our brain.

How does this affect us?

We feel depressed, angry or can have rapid changes in mood

Behave impulsively or aggressively

Take risks or act dangerously

Hate and feel stuck in the cycle of using, increasing hopelessness

Cause conflict with people we love

All of these factors increase our risk for suicide or the risk for someone we love

What to do?

Recognise if the substance use is playing a role in how we feel

Ask for help – go to your GP, AOD Counsellor, Community Health Nurse or get a referral to see a Psychologist

Avoid situations where you are at risk of either feeling bad or using

Take care of yourself – sleep, exercise, consider other drug treatment options

How do they work?

Alcohol and drugs (substances) work on our brain to cause different feelings, perceptions and experiences by affecting our brain chemistry.

Different “classes” of drugs work in different ways. Sometimes our brain and body change in response to the substance. This includes affecting our emotions and behaviour

What is Tolerance?

Tolerance is when you need to use more of the substance to achieve the same effect

What is Dependence?

Dependence is when you get used to a substance and you experience physical or psychological symptoms where you want to keep using the substance even when it causes you problems.

What is Withdrawal?

Physical or psychological symptoms that are frequently unpleasant after you stop using a substance

*If you feel suicidal please call Lifeline – 131 114
Suicide Call Back Service – 1300 65 94 67
or a number on the back of this page*