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Drug Facts

Office of National Drug Control Policy

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Methamphetamine

Overview

Methamphetamine is a highly addictive central nervous system stimulant that can be injected, snorted, smoked, or ingested orally. Methamphetamine users feel a short yet intense "rush" when the drug is initially administered. The effects of methamphetamine include increased activity, decreased appetite, and a sense of well being that can last from 20 minutes to 12 hours. The drug has limited medical uses for the treatment of narcolepsy, attention deficit disorders, and obesity.¹

Most amphetamines distributed to the black market are produced in clandestine laboratories. Methamphetamine laboratories are, by far, the most frequently encountered clandestine laboratories in the United States. The ease of clandestine synthesis, combined with tremendous profits, has resulted in significant availability of illicit methamphetamine. Large amounts of methamphetamine are also illicitly smuggled into the United States from Mexico.²

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For more information on methamphetamine, visit www.MethResources.gov.

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Extent of Use

According to the 2005 National Survey on Drug Use and Health (NSDUH), an estimated 10.4 million Americans aged 12 or older used methamphetamine at least once in their lifetimes for nonmedical reasons, representing 4.3% of the U.S. population in that age group. The number of past year methamphetamine users in 2005 was approximately 1.3 million (0.5% of the population aged 12 or older) and the number of past