

## Treatment

The following can help you to break your addiction cycle:

- Frequent appointments and urine testing, possibly as part of a Contingency Management (CM) programme.
- Community Reinforcement Approach (CRA) therapy is a very effective treatment that helps break the cycle of addiction by helping you to build up a healthy and rewarding lifestyle.

It does this by exploring your patterns of drug use, looking at your happiness with your life and by teaching you drug refusal, problem-solving and communication skills. It also helps you deal with managing other problems such as housing, unemployment and boredom.

- We give you information about how cocaine affects your body.
- Blood tests and physical examination including a heart check.
- Ear acupuncture.
- Inpatient detoxification may be necessary.
- Referral to residential rehabilitation can be arranged by our social workers.

Occasionally, some people require antidepressants or other medication.

## Does treatment work?

People who engage in treatment can expect to succeed in giving up their cocaine use and some treatment centres report an 80% success rate.

## Useful contact numbers

### Independence Trust (formerly GDAS)

Gloucester	01452 876440
Cheltenham	01242 584881
Stroud	01453 755711
Forest of Dean	01594 825656

### Primary Care Substance Misuse Service

Countywide Team	01452 523151
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### Support groups and contact phone numbers

NA UK 24 hour Helpline	0845 3733366
Release 24 hour Helpline	0845 4500215
Frank Drugs Helpline	0800 776600

### Hepatitis/HIV Counselling

Gloucester	01452 311744
Cheltenham	01242 274285

### Countywide Specialist Substance Misuse Service

West Gloucestershire Team	01452 891260
East Gloucestershire Team	01242 845614
Criminal Justice Drugs Team	01452 545779
Branchlea Cross	01242 845600

CSSMS



## Information for people affected by cocaine

## How common is cocaine/crack use?

Occasional cocaine use is widespread. A small proportion of regular users go on to develop problems with cocaine. These people are generally those who use cocaine intravenously or smoke crack and/or who have the ability to substantially increase their dose.

## I don't use cocaine every day so do I have a problem?

Unlike in opiate or alcohol dependence, where users take drugs or alcohol to prevent withdrawal symptoms, people with problematic cocaine use are probably taking cocaine in high dose binges.

These binges are combined with periods of 'crashing' when are clean from cocaine.

## Is cocaine addictive?

Cocaine enhances pleasure, self-confidence and wellbeing and initially it can appear as though it has no negative consequences.

Unfortunately, continued use leads to needing bigger and bigger doses to chase that high, it is therefore very psychologically addictive. Regular cocaine users will also notice physical withdrawal symptoms when they stop taking the drug.

For the first three days of stopping cocaine you will crash, crave sleep, have an increased appetite and feel low.

Days three to eight after your binge, you are likely to experience cravings for cocaine, have low energy levels and have strong memories of how you felt when taking cocaine.

Cravings often lead to relapse. If you manage to stay clean the craving eventually becomes less severe, but this can take several weeks and some amount of craving can last longer.

## How does cocaine affect my brain?

Cocaine use can lead to depression.

- Cocaine affects the pleasure and reward chemicals in your brain. Chronic use causes your brain chemicals adapt which reduces the pleasure and reward systems in your brain. This means when cocaine is withdrawn you may feel depressed.
- Cocaine also acts with your brain chemicals involved in learning and memory, particularly in the way you remember certain things about your surroundings. It can increase your memory of your drug use and the mood that you experienced with it.
- Even several weeks after stopping, memories of using cocaine can be brought on by certain situations or people. The more you use, the more powerful your memories.

## How does cocaine affect the mind?

Cocaine use can lead to:

- Irritability and aggression
- Panic and nervousness
- Terror
- Paranoia - e.g. believing you are being followed or being talked about.
- Hallucinations - e.g. hearing voices or feeling that your skin is 'crawling'.

## How does cocaine affect my body?

- Raised blood pressure.
- May cause irregular heart beat, heart attacks and even sudden death.
- Extreme weight loss.
- Using cocaine or crack by snorting puts you at risk of infection with HIV or Hepatitis B and C.
- Snorting cocaine can lead to damage of the septum which separates the nostrils.
- Crack use in a pipe can lead to lung problems including infections and "crack lung", where people are extremely short of breath and may get chest infections.
- Using cocaine might make you more likely to take risks with your physical safety and sexual health.
- Cocaine is not safe in pregnancy and is associated with risks to both mother and baby. Please see our 'Cocaine and Pregnancy' leaflet for more information.
- If used with heroin it may lead to an overdose.
- Injection of cocaine, particularly crack which has been converted for injecting, is extremely dangerous and can lead to blood clots.

## Cocaine and other substance use

Coming down from cocaine is often associated with excessive use of alcohol and tranquillisers such as valium and heroin.