

Harm reduction strategies for methamphetamine users

Strategies for whilst using:

- Testing strength first – using only a ¼ amount of the usual dose, when first using a new batch
- Limiting amount used – ‘capping’ use in a single session
- Avoiding combining with other drugs - effects can become unpredictable and increase risk of toxicity
- Using safe injecting practices
- Using alternatives to injecting - <http://hrvic.org.au/resources/>
- Using safe sex practices
- Rehydrating - aiming for 500mls/hour and avoiding overhydrating
- Protecting mouth and teeth - chewing gum to keep mouth moist, and using lip balm to protect lips if smoking methamphetamine
- Having ‘safe’ people to call – in case of feelings of paranoia or panic
- Knowing the signs of toxicity (overdose)
- Knowing to call an ambulance if toxicity is suspected, and to inform paramedics of all substances used

Strategies for ongoing harm reduction:

- Planning for use around obligations – children, work, finances etc.
- Eating well – to avoid weight loss and malnourishment with prolonged use
- Getting enough sleep – sleep deprivation exacerbates negative impacts of methamphetamines
- Regular testing for STIs and BBVs, and obtaining and adhering to treatment if necessary
- Seeking medical help with wound care
- Maintaining oral and dental health – regular brushing and flossing, and dental check-ups
- Seeking help with mental health issues
- Taking breaks and having time out from use