

How Long Does It Take To Get Addicted To A Dangerous Drug?

That depends on many factors. All of our bodies are different, and there are many different drugs. Bottom line: don't experiment or use dangerous drugs because trying the drug even once can be dangerous.

How long does it take to become addicted to a dangerous drug?

Seven days? Twenty-one days? Five weeks? Six months?

It depends on a lot of factors.

For each of us, the biological make-up of your own body, how sensitive you are to a certain drug, and simply the drug itself can all play a major role in if -- or how -- quickly you may become addicted.

One person might use a drug many times without suffering any ill effects, while another person might take the same drug and have a bad reaction or even overdose. Or another person may become addicted to a drug the first time he or she uses it, while yet another person might never develop an addiction.

As there are big differences between people using drugs, there are also major differences between the drugs themselves. So you may never use enough powdered cocaine to become addicted to it, but you might become addicted to crack cocaine or heroin the first time you try it.

Another case and point: opioids such as Fentanyl. Often times a user can overdose and die within moments of snorting, injecting or swallowing that drug.

Sometimes addiction can develop slowly and unexpectedly. As you continue to use the drug, you can slowly build up a tolerance to it, and that means you may no longer get the same feeling or "high" that you once got. So what do you do next? You take more and more drugs. As your body builds a higher tolerance for the drug, you continue to increase the amount and before long you are chemically dependent on it.

When a person continues to use a drug, even when it no longer provides them pleasure, it's called the "pathological pursuit of rewards" – or, in simple terms: addiction.

For teenagers, the risk for addiction and overdose death is higher, because areas in their brains that control decision-making, judgment, and self-control are still developing.

Most drugs affect the brain's "reward circuit" by flooding it with the chemical messenger dopamine and resulting in an increased likelihood of repeat use.

Even an individual with low risk factors can become addicted to a drug, especially if he or she is going through a particularly stressful or nerve wracking period. After enough doses, an addicted teen's limbic system craves the drug as it craves food, water, or friends.

If you are a teenager or parent of a teenager, and wondering if you or your son or daughter has problem with drugs, help is available.

Take a look at NOPE Task Force's website (www.nopetaskforce.org/get-help.php) for phone hotlines to call and other resources.

As we all know, many prescribed and illegal drugs potentially have life-threatening consequences, and individuals can have very different reactions to the same drug.

Bottom line: don't use the drug and don't experiment with the drug. Just stay away from it. Because trying the drug even once can be dangerous.

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