ana liffey drug project

ACTION • PREVENTION • SUPPORT

DUCK DIVE & SURVIVE!

USE YOUR HEAD

Harm Reduction Information

LEGAL HIGHS OR OTHERWISE

BE SAFE-
It is Safer not to Use Drugs

However, if you have made a decision to use, it is important to know that there are risks to taking both legal and illegal drugs. This booklet contains information to help reduce those risks.

Remember:

1. Drugs can and do affect people in differing ways. Also, a person can react differently at different times to the same drug or combination of drugs.

2. Taking drugs can make you feel good but this isn't always the case. Remember, not all the effects of taking drugs are positive. Unpleasant effects and reactions to drugs can include:

- **feeling depressed or anxious**
- **having hallucinations you don't want**
- **finding it hard to come down**
- **not being able to sleep**
- **feeling paranoid**
- **having fits (convulsions)**

If you're safe and do the right thing for you, you can reduce the risk of having a bad experience.

BE SAFE-
Use Your Head to Reduce Risk

General:

1. **Don't use alone.** Have a friend you trust with you; using with friends means there can be someone to help if things get bad.
2. If you are in a group, **get someone to stay straight** to keep an eye on the situation.
3. If you are trying something new, **take small amounts** to test its strength and effects.
4. If you have not used for a while your tolerance will be lower; even using small amounts can be dangerous. **Be careful.**
5. Try to **limit the number of drugs** you take at one time. It can be hard to judge the effects when drugs are used together. Using a combination of drugs can be unpredictable.
6. **Be prepared** – learn the skills in this booklet.

If you are Snorting:

1. Infections can be passed on in blood particles (so small you can't see them). Always carry your own tooter and **never share it**.

If you are Injecting:

1. Injecting a drug is **always dangerous** and is riskier than taking drugs in other ways.
2. If you are going to inject, always use sterile (clean) equipment. **NEVER share works, spoon, filter or water**; sharing any of these can pass on infections and blood borne viruses such as HIV and Hepatitis.

If you are Taking Pills:

1. Take them **in halves** to test the effects.

BE SAFE-
Use Your Head if Things Go Bad

If you do have a negative experience or have side effects that are hard to manage, there is assistance available:

If it's an emergency (such as overdose, loss of consciousness, difficulty breathing):

- **Don't Panic**
- **Call 999 and ask for an ambulance**
- **Stay with the person until the ambulance arrives**
- **Be honest with the ambulance crew about what the person has taken**

Have a look overleaf – there's more information on **overdose and the recovery position**.

If you have **longer term effects** such as depression, anxiety or addiction contact a drug or support service in your local area by calling:

1800 459 459

Mon - Fri, 9am - 5pm

Ask for a **local community drug service** or for the number of your local or regional drugs task force who can direct you to the nearest service.

If you want more information on harm reduction, call the **Ana Liffey Drug Project** on:

1800 78 68 28

Mon - Fri, 10am - 5pm

BE SAFE - Use Your Head - the Facts on Overdose

The symptoms of overdose can include:

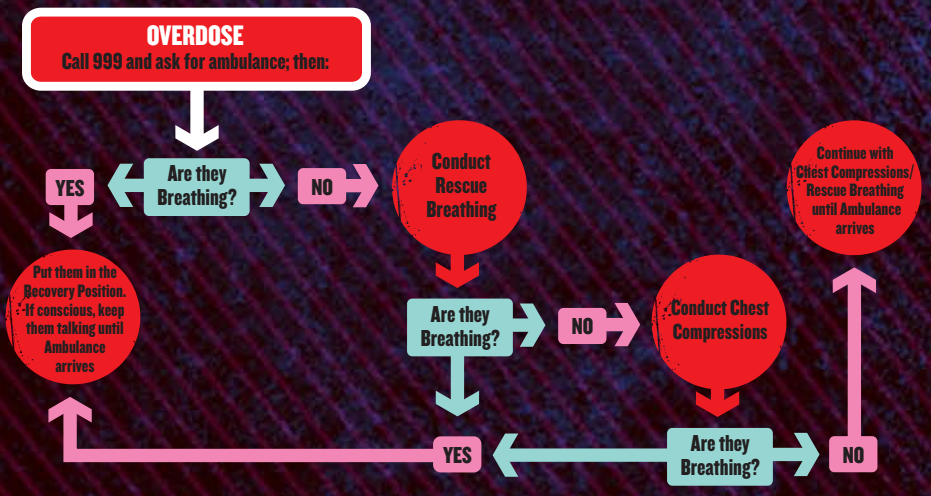
- Stopped or shallow breathing
- Loss of conciousness
- Turning blue (look out for blue lips)
- Inability to be roused
- Skin feeling clammy

What do I do?

Responding to overdose effectively requires asking some yes or no questions. The diagram below shows:

1. the **questions you should ask**
2. **what you should do** depending on the answer

Detailed information on the skills you'll need are over the page.



If someone overdoses:

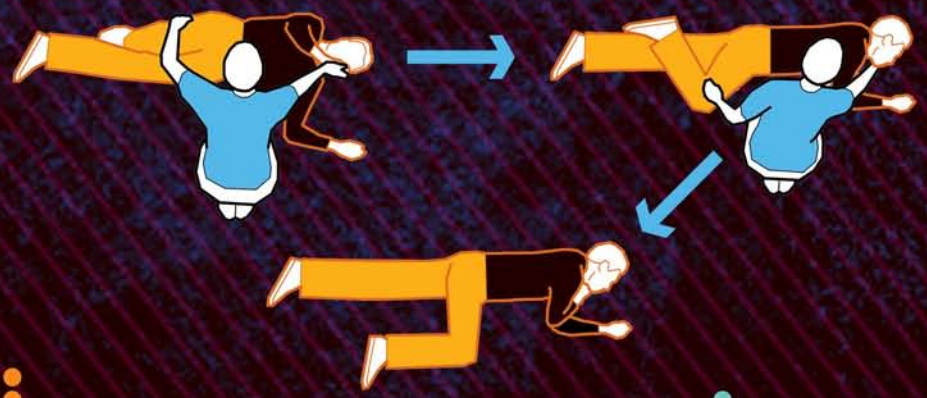
- **Don't** give them **hot drinks**
- **Don't walk** them around
- **Don't** put them in a **bath** or a **shower**

Why? Because all of these things can increase circulation which can mean the drugs are absorbed quicker by the body.

USE YOUR HEAD TO REMEMBER ...The Recovery Position

Putting someone in the recovery position opens their airways and reduces the risk of choking.

1. The person is lying flat on their back, with their hands by their sides
2. Open the person's airway – tilt their head back and lift their chin.
3. Straighten their legs and place the arm nearest you at right angles to their body
4. Pull their other arm across their body and place the back of their hand on the cheek nearest you
5. Grab the leg furthest away from you just above the knee; pull it up, keeping the foot flat on the ground. This is now their upper leg.
6. Keep their hand on their cheek, and use their upper leg to roll them towards you, onto their side.
7. Tilt their head back to ensure the airway is open.
8. Make sure that both the knee and hip of their upper leg are at right angles.



USE YOUR HEAD TO REMEMBER ...Rescue Breathing

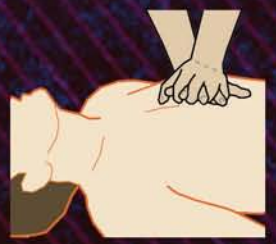
If a person is not breathing, give them 10 breaths of rescue breathing.

1. The person is lying flat on their back, with their hands by their sides
2. Remove anything you can see in their mouth, like gum. Lift their chin.
3. Pinch their nostrils together using your first finger and thumb
4. Take a deep breath and make a good seal around their lips with your mouth
5. Blow steadily until you see their chest rise
6. Take your mouth away, and let their chest deflate
7. Repeat steps 3-6

USE YOUR HEAD TO REMEMBER ...Chest Compressions

If you are doing rescue breathing, but the person isn't moving at all, or is getting bluer or colder, start chest compressions.

1. Find the place where the ribs meet the breastbone and lay 2 fingers there
2. Put the heel of your other hand on their breastbone, just above where your 2 fingers are
3. Place your hand on top of this hand, interlocking your fingers
4. Keeping your shoulders above the centre of the person's chest and your arms straight, press down on the chest by about 1.5 – 2 inches
5. Release the pressure, but keep your hands where they are. This is a chest compression.
6. Do 30 chest compressions at a rate of 100 compressions per minute. This will take just under 20 seconds
7. Give 2 breaths of mouth to mouth
8. Continue the cycle of 30 chest compressions to 2 breaths of rescue breathing until help arrives. (doing chest compressions is physically demanding and where possible, alternate with someone else)



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EUROPEAN ACTION ON DRUGS

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