

GLBT TASK FORCE FACT SHEET

CLUB DRUGS

The Canadian Centre on Substance Abuse (CCSA) is Canada's national addictions agency. Our mission is to provide objective, evidence-based information and advice that will help reduce the health, social and economic harm associated with substance abuse and addictions.

Established in 1988, CCSA is an arms-length, not-for-profit organization supported by the Federal Government through Canada's Drug Strategy. Below is an overview of some of the drugs popular in the GLBT Community.

POWDER AND CRACK COCAINE

Powdered cocaine (cocaine hydrochloride) is a stimulant that is extracted from the leaves of the cocoa plant, which is native to South America. Powdered cocaine is abused for the intense euphoric effects it produces. Crack cocaine is a highly addictive and powerful stimulant that is derived from powdered cocaine using a simple conversion process. Crack emerged as a drug of abuse in the mid 1980's. It is abused because it produces an immediate high and because it is easy and inexpensive to produce – rendering it readily available and affordable. *In Canada, cocaine is governed by the Controlled Drugs and Substances Act (Schedule I). Unlawful possession is subject to a fine of up to \$1,000 or imprisonment for up to six months, or both (summary offence), for a first offence. Penalties are greater for subsequent offences or possession of larger amounts (i.e., conviction for trafficking can bring life imprisonment).*

CRYSTAL METH

Crystal methamphetamine is a colourless form of d-methamphetamine, a powerful and highly addictive synthetic (man-made) stimulant. Crystal methamphetamine typically resembles small fragments of glass or shiny blue-white "rocks" of various sizes. Like powdered methamphetamine (another form of d-methamphetamine), crystal methamphetamine is abused because of the long lasting euphoric effects it produces. Crystal methamphetamine, however, typically has a higher purity level and may produce even longer-lasting and more intense physiological effects than the powdered form of the drug. *In Canada, crystal methamphetamine is governed by the Controlled Drugs and Substances Act (Schedule I). Unlawful possession is subject to a fine of up to \$1,000 or imprisonment for up to six months, or both (summary offence), for a first offence. Penalties are greater for subsequent offences or possession of larger amounts (i.e., conviction for trafficking can bring life imprisonment).*

MARIJUANA

Marijuana is the mind altering substance produced from a plant with the scientific name *Canabis sativa*. The drug is used because its primary active chemical tetrahydrocannabinol (THC), may induce relaxation and heightened senses. *Marajuana is still illegal in Canada.*

GHB

GHB (gamma-hydroxybutyrate) is a powerful central nervous system depressant that the human body produces in small amounts. A synthetic (man-made) version of GHB was developed in the 1920's as an anesthetic. Individuals abuse synthetic GHB because of its euphoric and sedative effects. Because of its anesthetic properties, GHB also has been used by sexual predators to incapacitate their victims. *In Canada, GHB is governed by the Controlled Drugs and Substances Act (Schedule I). Unlawful possession is subject to a fine of up to \$1,000 or imprisonment for up to six months, or both (summary offence), for a first offence. Penalties are greater for subsequent offences or possession of larger amounts (i.e., conviction for trafficking can bring life imprisonment).*

KETAMINE

Ketamine is an anesthetic that is abused for its hallucinogenic properties. Its predominant legitimate use as a veterinary anesthetic, however, it has been approved for use with both animals and humans. Abuse of the drug gained popularity when users discovered that it produced effects similar to those associated with PCP. Because of its anesthetic properties, ketamine also reportedly has been used by sexual predators to incapacitate their intended victims. *In Canada, ketamine is governed by the Controlled Drugs and Substances Act (Schedule I). Unlawful possession is subject to a fine of up to \$1,000 or imprisonment for up to six months, or both (summary offence), for a first offence. Penalties are greater for subsequent offences or possession of larger amounts (i.e., conviction for trafficking can bring life imprisonment).*

MCMA or Ecstasy

MDMA (also known as Ecstasy) is a synthetic (man-made) drug that causes both hallucinogenic and stimulant effects. The drug was developed in Germany in the early twentieth century as an appetite suppressant, but today's users consume the drug for its hallucinogenic effects, which they claim heighten their senses and makes them feel less inhibited. Users consume MCMA for its stimulant properties, which enable them to dance for hours at all-night parties and nightclubs. *In Canada, MDMA is governed by the Controlled Drugs and Substances Act (Schedule I). Unlawful possession is subject to a fine of up to \$1,000 or imprisonment for up to six months, or both (summary offence), for a first offence. Penalties are greater for subsequent offences or possession of larger amounts (i.e., conviction for trafficking can bring life imprisonment).*