

**Test questions - Test Your Drugs Knowledge**  
**True or False! With answers for practitioners**

**Alcohol**

1. It is possible to drink so much that you can overdose and die.
2. A pint of beer contains the same amount of alcohol as one measure of whisky.
3. Alcohol affects women more than men.
4. Drinking small amounts of alcohol damages your health.
5. Alcohol is a stimulant - it wakes you up and gives you energy.

**LSD/Ecstasy**

6. People can become 'addicted' to LSD.
7. LSD can make people have hallucinations - they see and hear things differently.
8. Ecstasy is taken as a pill or tablet.
9. The effects of Ecstasy are the same as LSD.
10. Long-term use of LSD causes brain damage.

**Amphetamine (Speed)**

11. Amphetamine is usually injected.
12. Amphetamine gives people a rush of energy.
13. Amphetamine was given to troops in the Second World War.
14. The after effects of taking liquid speed can be bad.

**Nitrites (poppers/ Liquid Gold/Rush)**

15. Nitrites are bought from joke and sex shops.
16. Nitrites give you a rush of energy.
17. The effects last for 2-3 hours.
18. If you have heart trouble it can be dangerous to take nitrites.

**Cannabis**

19. Cannabis is not a very harmful drug.
20. Cannabis is always smoked with tobacco.
21. You can overdose on cannabis.
22. Cannabis is openly sold in Holland.
23. Using Cannabis can lead to anxiety attacks.

**Caffeine**

24. Caffeine is contained in many soft drinks.
25. 8 - 10 cups of tea or coffee a day and you could be addicted to caffeine.
26. Drinking tea and coffee does no damage to health in the long term.
27. Drinking tea or coffee can make ulcers or high blood pressure worse.

**Solvents (glue and gas)**

28. Sniffing solvents can result in immediate death.
29. Sniffing glue is usually more dangerous than using gas.
30. It is easy to become dependent or addicted to solvents.
31. Solvents are only used by under sixteen's.
32. It is illegal to sniff solvents on the streets.

**Cocaine/ Crack**

33. Cocaine is only used by rich people.
34. Cocaine is usually snorted up the nose.
35. Crack is a completely new drug.
36. A few tries of crack and you're addicted.

## Answers - How Did You Do?

### Alcohol

1. TRUE

Each year some young and not-so-young people die from an overdose of alcohol. Also sometimes people become so drunk they choke to death on their own vomit.

2. FALSE

1/2 pint of beer or larger contains the same amount of alcohol as 1 measure of whisky (normal pub strengths). 1 'unit' of alcohol = 1/2 pint of beer or larger, 1 measure of spirits, 1 glass of wine or 1 small glass of sherry. The limit for drink/driving is about 5 units (less for some people depending on size, body weight and metabolism).

3. TRUE

In general, partly because females tend to be smaller and weigh less than men and partly because of the different percentages and distribution of body fat. However, this is not always the case. Effects will also depend on how much people drink and their mood.

4. FALSE

Drinking small amounts not too regularly would appear to do very little harm.

5. FALSE

It is a depressant. It slows down the brain and reactions. In the early stages of getting drunk inhibitions are depressed - this may make you more talkative and e.g. Willing to dance. As you become more drunk you slow down rapidly and lose co-ordination.

### LSD/Ecstasy

6. FALSE

At least in the physical/addictive sense. In fact, if too much is taken too often, further doses don't work. A small minority of people may take it on a regular basis.

7. TRUE

LSD tends to result in colours and sounds being intensified. Some people report that they see and hear things which are not really there. This can be risky if you are not sure what you are doing or where you are or if you already feel anxious.

8. TRUE

One danger is that you can't be sure what is on the tablet or how much you are taking.

9. SOME TRUTH

Ecstasy is a drug which combines the effects of amphetamine (speed) and LSD. However, at normal doses, it is not hallucinogenic in the same way as LSD. The speed effect gives people a rush of energy. It also tends to heighten awareness of people and surroundings. It may heighten sexual feelings. Effects will depend on the strength of the dose, what the individual expects to happen and the situation in which it is taken.

10. FALSE

Despite much public concern about LSD, there is no evidence that long-term LSD use causes brain damage.

## **Amphetamine**

11. FALSE

It is usually taken in pill form or snorted up the nose as a powder. However, it is also sometimes injected. How it is taken varies from area to area and over time as fashions change.

12. TRUE

It is a bit like 'borrowed energy'. In other words, after a long period of 'speeding' users tend to need a long sleep to recover.

13. TRUE

By the British, American and Japanese military to combat 'battle fatigue' as well as taken by Hitler.

14. TRUE

Extreme tiredness, hunger, depression, and feeling lethargic (no energy) are common.

## **Nitrites (poppers/ Liquid Gold/Rush)**

15. TRUE

They are not (yet) illegal to sell or use in the UK.

16. TRUE

They open the veins causing a rush of blood to the brain. Those using nitrites claim increased sexual pleasure but also palpitations of the heart and headaches.

17. FALSE

Usually for only 2 - 5 minutes.

18. TRUE

The effect is to reduce blood pressure suddenly which could cause a heart attack. They can also cause severe headaches and vomiting. They should be particularly avoided by those with heart trouble, anaemia or glaucoma (an eye disease). Swallowing nitrites rather than inhaling them can cause severe vomiting, shock and some deaths have occurred.

## **Cannabis**

19. TRUE

There is little evidence that cannabis use is particularly harmful. However, the use of any drug can lead to problems depending on how much is used, how often, by whom and in what ways. For example, although cannabis is not regarded as addictive, excessive and regular use may increase anxiety or paranoia. Also driving or operating machinery whilst 'stoned' can be dangerous. It is against the law to possess or supply cannabis and penalties are severe.

20. FALSE

It can be smoked with or without tobacco. The herbal form can be rolled into a cigarette by itself or smoked in a pipe. It can also be cooked. The resin form can be smoked in a pipe or on a pin (with glass over it) without tobacco, cooked with or eaten. One problem with eating it is less control over how much is taken.

21. FALSE

Although consuming large amounts in a short space of time may lead to people feeling very disoriented and dizzy and they may vomit.

22. TRUE

It is sold in licensed coffee shops. It is not strictly legal but it is tolerated by the police.

23. TRUE

Especially if users are already anxious.

## **Caffeine**

24. TRUE

Look at the contents labels. With caffeine being a stimulant drug (wakes you up, gives you up, gives you up) some people are worried about how much young children consume. The worry is it could lead to 'hyper-activity', not sleeping being able to relax.

25. TRUE

Many people who have drunk this amount for a time find it very difficult to stop and get very anxious and feel bad if they try. You could say it's a case of addiction that many people just accept.

26. PROBABLY FALSE

Research is only just beginning into this and it is suggested that there is an increased risk of peptic cancer and heart disease. However, the effect may be very slight. Certainly people who already have ulcers, high blood pressure or are anxious often find caffeine makes the problem worse.

27. TRUE

Coffee in particular increases stomach acidity whilst caffeine raises heart rate and blood pressure.

## **Solvents**

28. TRUE

Some solvents, especially aerosols and cleaning fluids, can weaken the heart and result in heart failure. Some aerosols squirted directly into the mouth can cause death through suffocation. Using glue inside a large plastic bag placed over the head can lead to suffocation.

29. FALSE

But it does depend on how it's taken and where. (see answer no. 28). Using in dangerous places like railway lines, canal banks, on top of buildings is risky. Also using alone is more dangerous than with other people around who can help you if you get into trouble or lose consciousness.

30. FALSE

It is very rare that someone becomes physically dependent on solvents. They may, however, find it hard to stop because they enjoy the effects. This is called psychological dependence and does sometimes occur.

31. FALSE

It is not illegal although some young people using solvents may be moved on by the police or offend against laws dealing with unruly or offensive behaviour or 'breach of the peace'.

## **Cocaine / Crack**

33. FALSE

Although cocaine can be expensive and has sometimes had a glamorous, expensive lifestyle image, it is not just used by the rich. The type of people using it often varies from area to area depending on local prices, availability and local trends.

34. TRUE

Although it is sometimes injected and can be smoked.

35. FALSE

Whilst the name 'crack' (rock, wash, base) is relatively new, some cocaine users have been making their own 'crack' for several years.

36. FALSE

Crack is a smokable form of cocaine. Although smoking crack tends to give a more intense effect than snorting cocaine, it does not lead to instant addiction. It depends on how much is taken, for how long and also on the individual user and his/her lifestyle and situation. Think about what we mean by 'addiction'. Also although crack is sometimes sold based on being 'purer' than cocaine itself, it still retains all of the cocaine from which it was made.