

## Ecstasy-: Basics

Other names: E, disco biscuits, ekkis, pills or names from the symbols on the tablets, i.e. smiley faces or Mitsubishis,

- Ecstasy usually come as different coloured tablets or capsules, with different logos on
- The tablet should contain some MDMA, although it is not possible to know how much is in there.
- The tablet may well contain other chemicals similar to MDMA, as well as amphetamine (speed), caffeine, glucose, and possibly LSD or ketamine
- MDMA may also be sold as a powder that can be swallowed (bombed) or snorted (sniffed). This powder will also be cut (mixed) with similar substances to ecstasy
- The whole experience may last up to 6 hours (depending on what is in the pill)



### The effects:

- Typically a user might expect to feel like they have more energy
- Users can feel more open, empathic, and loving towards others (although this 'loved-up' affect wears off with repeated use)
- MDMA has a hallucinatory effect the users may see, or sense things that are not fully there
- Can cause a very tense jaw, or perhaps chew their cheeks (gurning) without realizing
- Can get quite worked up, frightened, and panicky on ecstasy

### Risks

- Can make you feel depressed and tired for days—this is known as experiencing a 'come down'
- Overheating and dehydration
- Has been known to cause liver and kidney problems

### Legal status

Please refer to <http://www.release.org.uk> where information is kept up-to-date

### Need more advice

[www.drugscope.co.uk](http://www.drugscope.co.uk)  
[www.talktofrank.com](http://www.talktofrank.com)

## Ecstasy-: More Information

### Side effects and risks

#### Ecstasy and Heat Stroke

- Ecstasy causes a rise in body temperature. If this is combined with the fact that someone is dancing in a hot place for a number of hours then they may well become dehydrated
- It is recommended that people using ecstasy in this way should sip no more than 1 pint of water or non-alcoholic drink per hour.
- Ecstasy also causes the release of an anti-diuretic hormone, which makes it harder to pass water (to go for a pee). In some cases people have drunk too much water whilst using ecstasy but have not passed this extra water out of their system causing a potentially fatal condition known as hyponatraemia

#### Low Mood

Ecstasy/MDMA provokes the release of extra serotonin into the brain, hence users feel their mood lift. However, this boost of serotonin is followed by a short period of reduced serotonin levels—users may feel low as they come down, and they may also feel low for a 2 or 3 days afterwards (sometimes called the 'mid-week blues')

#### The Downside

Most people use ecstasy to feel the buzz (of using a stimulant), and the 'loved-up' feelings. However, the downside is that it causes some people to become confused and disorientated, thinking that something terrible is happening, or can feel anxious, panicky, depressed, paranoid and unsociable



**Driving** is dangerous on this substance

For further information please refer to

<http://www.brake.org.uk/index.php?p=913>

[www.drugdrive.co.uk](http://www.drugdrive.co.uk)

<http://www.rta.nsw.gov.au/roadsafety/drinkdriving/drugs/index.html>

#### Many things affect the user's experience of a drug:

1. Their physical and mental health, their mood, their expectations
2. The drug—how much is taken, how strong it is, how it is taken
3. The environment—where the user is, who they are with

All these things could have either a positive or a negative affect on the user's experience of the drug

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## Harm Minimisation

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Ecstasy is a stimulant drug (like cocaine, caffeine, amphetamine, and nicotine) which has the effect of reducing the user's appetite and making it difficult to sleep. It's a good idea to give yourself time to recover from using ecstasy by making sure you have time to rest

If you are in a hot environment and dancing a lot, then remember to take time to re-hydrate by sipping a pint of non-alcoholic drink each hour

Avoid using ecstasy or MDMA with alcohol as this may make dehydration more likely

Ecstasy and MDMA use has been linked to depression and anxiety in some users, both when they are using the substance and for a period of time afterwards.

The long-term effects of using ecstasy are not fully understood. However, this may become clearer as people who first used the drug when they were young reach their 40s, 50s and 60s

Ecstasy/MDMA are stimulant drugs that increase the heart rate and blood pressure. This may well be dangerous for people with heart disease, or an undiagnosed heart or circulatory condition