

Safer Use of Cocaine

Injecting

- Use a **sharp, sterile syringe** each time you inject.
- **Do not share paraphernalia** (including syringes and stems) to avoid the transmission of HIV, hepatitis, TB and other infectious diseases.
- Use **alcohol pads** on the injection site before fixing.
- Rotate your injection sites.
- **Take your time** and make sure you're in a vein before you inject.
- For **bruising of veins and tissue**, apply Arnica tincture or cream (available at herb stores).
- **Skin popping or muscling** is not advisable. If you do, however, then immediately apply hot water with a washcloth or compress to prevent an abscess and infection.

Smoking

- **Cover the mouthpiece** of the stem with tape or rubber to avoid cuts or heat burns.

Snorting

- Snorting causes nasal damage by deteriorating the mucous membranes of the septum (the main cartilage in the nose). Long-term use may eat a hole through your septum.

Crashing

- Eat, sleep and drink plenty of water and juice, even if you are not hungry and especially if you've been on a binge.

Avoiding Overdose

- **Sample** the cocaine (particularly if you plan on injecting). For example, do half a hit or inject the hit extra slowly. **Do this especially when the drug is from a new source or if you haven't used for a while and your tolerance is down.**
- Mixing cocaine with opiates (known as **speedballing**) increases the risk of overdose because the body is receiving two very different messages: hurry up and slow down.

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