

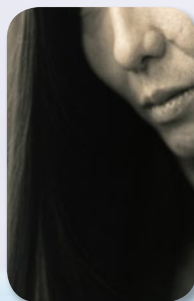


“And when you say ‘I only do it sometimes,’ that ‘sometimes’ is your ticket to a terrible addiction that will be hard to tackle without professional or family support. In the end you lose everything and everyone who loves you.”<sup>1</sup>

## What is Crack Cocaine?

powdered cocaine. It is cocaine that has been further processed and mixed with other substances to create rock-like chunks. Crack cocaine is also known as “crack”, “free-base”, “rock” and in some Inuktitut dialects “*aputi*”, “*aputik sitiuyuaq*” or “*coke*”. Crack cocaine is taken by smoking it and sometimes it is mixed with cigarettes or marijuana, before it is smoked. Or users dissolve it in water and inject it into their body with a needle. The user is never quite sure what harmful substances they are inhaling or injecting into their body because of the other things the drug is mixed with.

People take Crack cocaine because it makes them feel good for a short period of time. Crack cocaine provides an ultimate high when smoked, or injected into the body. Once the user comes down from



- intense pleasure or euphoria
- alertness and in some cases hyper-alertness
- increased sense of well being
- decreased anxiety.

People who have cravings for Crack cocaine may often steal money from family, friends or commit crimes in order to buy more of the drug. This could lead to violence within the family and community. Short-term effects of continued use of Crack cocaine include:

- an overdose which can cause seizures, strokes, heart attacks, kidney failure, coma and death

— continues

“It was about numbing my pain. I lost my identity. All I cared about was crack, nothing else mattered. It was a big cloud over me all the time. I lost my boys, my health ... it costs you everything.”<sup>2</sup>

- rapid breathing, increased blood pressure and increased heart rate
- paranoid thinking (thinking everyone is against you) or psychosis and hallucinations
- elevated body temperature and cold sweats
- crack pipes, usually made of glass, can crack and cause blistering, cuts and burning of fingers or lips.

Long-term effects of continued use of Crack cocaine include:

- trouble sleeping, lung infections
- irritability and mood swings
- if users share needles or pipes, possible transmission of diseases such as Hepatitis C, and HIV which can lead to AIDS
- depression, loss of appetite.

### What Can You Do If You Think Someone is Using Crack Cocaine?

If someone you know is taking Crack and you want to help, there

are some options available. These include residential treatment centres, outpatient services or twelve



step programs where the person can receive many different therapies including:

- education on the disease process
- detoxification of the drug from the body

- more effective coping skills
- medication that will offset depression and help with mood swings.

Often the immediate family affected by the addiction will receive help as well, where they can resolve their own emotions. Crack cocaine is among the most addictive drugs, making it extremely difficult to overcome. People trying to quit Crack cocaine often have relapses. If someone you care about is taking Crack cocaine, go see your Community Health Worker or Public Health Nurse and ask to look at these sites together to help you find out what treatment options are available.

<sup>2</sup> Mamisarvik Trauma and Addictions Centre. February 17, 2009.

### FOR MORE INFORMATION:

Mamisarvik Trauma and Addictions Centre:  
[www.ontarioinuit.ca/html/addictions.htm](http://www.ontarioinuit.ca/html/addictions.htm)  
or call 613-563-3546 and ask to speak to a counsellor. This is an Inuit-specific counselling program that can help you and your family.

ᐃᓄᐃᑦ ᐅᑦᑕᐃᐃᐃᑦ  
Inuit Tuttarvingat



1-877-602-4445  
[inuit@naho.ca](mailto:inuit@naho.ca)  
[www.naho.ca/inuit/e/resources/](http://www.naho.ca/inuit/e/resources/)

### OTHER RESOURCES:

Drug Rehab and Drug Addiction Treatment:  
[www.drugaddictiontreatment.ca/get-help-now.html](http://www.drugaddictiontreatment.ca/get-help-now.html)

Canadian Centre on Substance Abuse:  
[www.ccsa.ca](http://www.ccsa.ca)

Government of Canada National Anti-Drug Strategy:  
[www.nationalantidrugstrategy.gc.ca](http://www.nationalantidrugstrategy.gc.ca)