

Substance Use, Abuse and Dependence

Classification and Information on Substances

Methaqualone (Mandrax)

DESCRIPTION	Mandrax is a synthetic drug, with an active ingredient called Methaqualone. It is usually found in tablet form. Originally these tablets were prescribed as sleeping tablets, and used to treat high blood pressure and anxiety attacks. But these were later banned because of their severe side-effects.
MODE OF ADMINISTRATION	Although it can be administered orally, it is usually crushed and then mixed with dagga and smoked.
PRIMARY EFFECT	Central nervous system depressant
SHORT-TERM EFFECTS	In addition to effects experienced from cannabis (if smoked), the following effects may be present: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initial feelings of euphoria; • Feelings of relaxation and drowsiness; • Reduced heart rate and blood pressure; • Brief loss of consciousness; • Slowed breathing; • Reduced sensitivity to pain; • Impaired judgement; • Loss of co-ordination and slurred speech; • Distorted perception of time; • Slowed reaction time; • In large doses, seizures, coma and death; • Can be lethal when combined with other central nervous system depressants (e.g., alcohol, PCP and Heroin); • Risk of injury.
LONG-TERM EFFECTS	Heavy and continued use can lead to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase in tolerance, therefore increased need for larger doses to achieve same results; • Anaemia; • Impaired liver functioning; • Decrease in appetite and severe weight loss; • Headaches and stomach cramps; • Impaired vision and slurred speech; • Cognitive impairments (including concentration, attention and memory); • Poor muscle control; • Dental problems; • Psychiatric disturbances (including insomnia, anxiety, irritability, depression and psychosis); • Risk of injury (resulting from accidents and aggressive, violent or criminal behaviour);
ADDICTION POTENTIAL	High psychological and physical addiction potential.
TREATMENT OPTIONS	In cases of heavy and prolonged use, inpatient and/or outpatient treatment with the use of multiple therapeutic methods (individual, family and group psychotherapy) is usually necessary to achieve lasting abstinence. Co-morbid conditions are treated if required.