



#9909

ECSTASY—THE E STREET BLUES

AIMS MULTIMEDIA, 2002

Grade Level: 9-13+
21 mins.

DESCRIPTION

Methylenedioxymethamphetamine (MDMA) is better known as ecstasy, the club drug of choice at raves, bars, and dance scenes. But what is it, and what does it do? Users and doctors discuss its history, its effects on the body and brain, and the psychological damage it can cause. Ecstasy may not be physically addictive, but the search for the sense of well-being and euphoria that it initially produces can be. Concludes with how and where to get help. Some scientific explanations given.

ACADEMIC STANDARDS

Subject Area: Health

- Standard: Understands aspects of substance use and abuse
 - ♦ Benchmark: Knows the short- and long-term consequences of the use of alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs (e.g., physical consequences such as shortness of breath, cirrhosis, lung cancer, emphysema; psychological consequences such as low self-esteem, paranoia, depression, apathy; social consequences such as crime, domestic violence, loss of friends) (See INSTRUCTIONAL GOALS 1 and 3-8)
 - ♦ Benchmark: Knows the short- and long-term effects associated with the use of alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs on reproduction, pregnancy, and the health of children (See INSTRUCTIONAL GOALS 1.)
 - ♦ Benchmark: Knows how the abuse of alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs often plays a role in dangerous behavior and can have adverse consequences on the community (e.g., house fires, motor vehicle crashes, domestic violence, date rape, transmission of diseases through needle sharing or sexual activity) (See INSTRUCTIONAL GOALS 1.)
 - ♦ Benchmark: Knows community resources that are available to assist people with alcohol, tobacco, and other drug problems (See INSTRUCTIONAL GOALS 9.)
- Standard: Knows the availability and effective use of health services, products, and information

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- ♦ Benchmark: Knows situations that require professional health services in the areas of prevention, treatment, and rehabilitation (e.g., persistent depression, prenatal and perinatal care, treatment or management of disease, alcohol- or drug-related problems, neglect and child abuse) (See INSTRUCTIONAL GOALS 9.)

INSTRUCTIONAL GOALS

1. To illustrate that ecstasy is not a harmless drug, but one that can cause serious short-term and long-term damage to the user's body, brain, and relationships.
2. To identify the chemical name of the street drug ecstasy as MDMA.
3. To describe the effects of MDMA upon the brain and cite depression and long-term brain damage as possible results of taking ecstasy.
4. To explain how MDMA can cause depression by depleting serotonin.
5. To give examples of the short-term dangers of using ecstasy.
6. To identify ecstasy as an illegal substance and identify the legal ramifications of using or selling it.
7. To explain the effects of MDMA when dancing in a hot environment and explain some of the physical dangers related to overheating.
8. To explain the danger posed by not knowing what is really in a pill someone calls "ecstasy."
9. To identify two types of support services for those having problems with substance abuse.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Ecstasy use among young people has been doubling nearly every year. It is an integral part of the dance and music scene. Many users start as young as 13. Ecstasy has become popular in part because many potential users believe it is harmless fun, but the growing number of emergency room patients who have taken ecstasy prove that it can be very dangerous.

VOCABULARY

- | | | |
|-------------------------|---------------------|-----------------|
| 1. addictive | 7. euphoria | 13. overheating |
| 2. bipolar | 8. hallucinogen | 14. rave |
| 3. controlled substance | 9. heat stroke | 15. speed |
| 4. dealers | 10. hyperthermia | 16. stimulant |
| 5. ecstasy (MDMA) | 11. methamphetamine | 17. users |
| 6. empathy | 12. overdose | |

BEFORE SHOWING

1. Review illegal drugs. Discuss various drugs and their effects on the mind and body.
2. Discuss the drug ecstasy. Ask:
 - a. How many have heard of a drug called ecstasy?
 - b. Is it dangerous or pretty safe?

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- c. Do you know of people who have used it?
- d. What is the chemical name of ecstasy?
- e. Why do people take ecstasy?
- f. What are some of the dangers of taking ecstasy?

DURING SHOWING

1. View the video more than once, with one showing uninterrupted.
2. Consider pausing after various segments to clarify the content or issues discussed.

AFTER SHOWING

Discussion Items and Questions

1. What are the short-term and long-term effects of ecstasy on the body?
2. Name the medical term for overheating.
3. Near the beginning of the program, a young man in a black hat says: "If you're going to take drugs, you're going to have to face the consequences." What are some of the "consequences" he was talking about?
4. Why do people take ecstasy?
5. What does serotonin control? What effect does ecstasy have on the serotonin level in the brain? How can this lead to serious depression?
6. Give specific examples of the detrimental effects ecstasy use can have upon family and school life.
7. Discuss the history of ecstasy. When was it legal? When did it become illegal? Why?
8. What can happen if you get caught with ecstasy by the police, school administrators, parents, or guardians? What are the consequences for selling ecstasy?
9. Some people take drugs to be "cool." Which of the "cool" people would visit you if you went to prison for drug possession?
10. Do you think that taking ecstasy would make a person's life happier or less happy? Explain.
11. How has your idea of ecstasy changed by viewing this program?
12. What would you say or do if someone offered you ecstasy and said, "Don't worry. It's safe"?
13. Do some of the people in the program think ecstasy is addictive? Explain.
14. Why do you think some of the people in the video did not want their faces to be seen?
15. Discuss whether users of MDMA are more likely to engage in wild, extreme acts or to have emotional and interpersonal problems.
16. Is there any way to really tell what's in a pill? Explain.

Applications and Activities

1. Role-play in pairs various scenarios related to use of ecstasy. Switch roles and repeat the scenario to experience "the other side" of the situation. Example scenarios include:

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- a. A paramedic or emergency room worker who has seen someone overheat after using ecstasy at a rave or dance party must describe to the patient's parent or guardian what happened.
 - b. A TV reporter interviews a bouncer or doorman/woman who is describing the medical emergencies common among ecstasy users.
 - c. Two friends: one is offering the other some ecstasy before a party and the other is finding ways to decline the offer.
 - d. Siblings: One is a user and the other is trying, in a caring way, to convince the user that the risks of using ecstasy far outweigh any short-term high they may get.
2. Research methamphetamines. Report on various forms and their effects.
 3. Create posters warning of the effects of ecstasy.
 4. Practice refusal skills. Brainstorm various ways to refuse illegal drugs. Role-play to reinforce the skills.
 5. Investigate the effects of ecstasy on the body. Report findings to the class.
 6. Invite a police officer or drug rehab counselor to speak about drug use, specifically ecstasy, in the local area.
 7. Investigate local treatment options for teens and young adults who are substance abusers. Create a chart to compare the components of the programs.

SUMMARY

Ecstasy—The E-Street Blues explores the dangers of illegal chemicals gaining popularity with today's youth and young adults. It includes a brief history of ecstasy (MDMA), the drug's physical effects upon the body, the ways it can affect the brain, potentially harmful overheating caused by MDMA, and ecstasy's psychological toll, including: depression, mood swings, memory loss, and family problems. The downsides are conveyed through unrehearsed interviews with "ravers," recovering users, and expert information from a psychiatrist at a major university and the director of a youth drug treatment program.

Former users—many still in their teens—talk openly and honestly about the devastating effects ecstasy has had on their friends and on their own lives. A teenage girl talks of losing everything but the shoes on her feet, just because she got high. A young man tells the story of his near murder and his friend's suicide while on ecstasy and antidepressants. This powerfully moving program concludes with information on how to avoid the pitfalls of ecstasy use and where to get help.



CMP RELATED RESOURCES

- [*Club Drugs—Dancing with Danger* #9908](#)
- [*Hallucinogens* #8748](#)
- [*The Teen Files Flipped: Drug Use and Addiction* #9915](#)
- [*The Teen Files Flipped: The Reality of Drug Use* #9924](#)

World Wide Web



The following Web sites complement the contents of this guide; they were selected by professionals who have experience in teaching deaf and hard of hearing students. Every effort was made to select accurate, educationally relevant, and “kid safe” sites. However, teachers should preview them before use. The U.S. Department of Education, the National Association of the Deaf, and the Captioned Media Program do not endorse the sites and are not responsible for their content.

- **THE VAULTS OF EROWID: MDMA**

<http://www.erowid.org/chemicals/mdma/mdma.shtml>

Contains links to “MDMA,” “FAQs,” “Pill Testing Kits,” “Healthy Use,” “History,” “Writings,” and “Articles,” as well as “Media Coverage” and “Personal Experiences.”

- **INFOFACTS—MDMA (ECSTASY)**

<http://www.nida.nih.gov/Infofax/ecstasy.html>

This site is sponsored by the National Institute on Drug Abuse and contains a definition of the drug MDMA; cognitive, physical and psychological effect; drug purity; and extent of use. It also includes numerous government Web links.

- **ECSTASY AND CLUB DRUGS**

<http://www.focusas.com/Ecstasy.html>

Browse through this list of information and resource links. To the left of the Web page, select data regarding research study, health hazards, signs and extent of use, or a listing of books.

- **CLUB DRUGS & RAVES**

<http://www.streetdrugs.org/rave.htm>

On this Web site, choose from an extensive list of specific drugs or read about the most common club drugs. Links at the top connect to information for parents, teachers, and students. Also has links to information on law enforcement and how to contact the organization.

- **ABCNEWS.COM: ECSTASY RISING WITH PETER JENNINGS**

http://abcnews.go.com/sections/WNT/Primetime/ecstasy_040401-1.html

Despite an aggressive effort by the federal government to curb the use of ecstasy, a growing number of people are disregarding the warnings. Read about another side to this street drug, narrated and produced by ABC anchorman Peter Jennings.