

Alcohol

a.k.a.: lager, alcopops, cocktails, beer, wine, spirits, etc.

Headline fact:

Out of every 10 people using alcohol services, more than *8 experience mental health problems (*85.5%).

More detail:

- The chance of having a psychiatric disorder is significantly increased by alcohol dependence.
- 1 adult in every 13 is **dependent** on alcohol.
- Alcohol consumption is associated with 80% (8 in every 10) of suicides.
- Alcohol contributes to 1 in 3 divorces.
- 58% of male remand prisoners and 63% of male sentenced prisoners were drinking at hazardous levels in the year before going to prison. This compares with 38% in the general population of 16 – 74 year olds.
- Similarly, for females, 36 % of remand prisoners and 39% of sentenced prisoners were drinking at hazardous levels in the year before going to prison compared with 15% in the general 16 – 74 population.
- Alcohol acts on multiple neurotransmitter systems, disrupting the balance between inhibitory and excitatory neurotransmitters. Short term alcohol exposure, long term exposure and withdrawal or reduction after long term exposure all have particular effects on the balance, including craving after long term exposure.

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Other drugs 3

Solvents, gases, glues and aerosols

Little research has been published on the mental health effects of solvents. But, there is strong evidence that early abuse of drugs greatly increases risk of psychosis later in life and solvent abuse is most common amongst teenagers.

Tranquillisers / benzodiazepines

a.k.a.: ativan, mogadon (moggies), rohypnol (roofies, rophies, roche, forget-me pill), librium, normison, valium etc. 'chemical' names: diazepam, `.....'pam, etc.

- **Some tranquillisers are addictive, leading to craving and dependency.**
- **Use of Rohypnol causes anterograde amnesia – individuals may not remember events they experienced while under the effects of the drug.**

Multiple use

There is growing evidence to show that mixing drugs causes even greater damage to mental health.

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