

# KNOW THE FACTS

## What is ice?

Ice – properly known as crystal methamphetamine – is a stimulant drug. Stimulants speed up the messages travelling between the brain and the body. The drug usually comes as small, chunky clear crystals that look like ice. It can also come as white or brownish crystal-like powder with a strong smell and bitter taste.

## Understanding the effects

The effects of ice commonly include:

- Increased alertness, energy, excitability, talkativeness and hyperactivity
- Significant feelings of pleasure and increased confidence
- Rapid heart rate
- Increased anxiety with reduced appetite
- Teeth grinding and excessive sweating
- Increase in aggressive or anti-social behaviours

## Overdose

An overdose is an amount or dose of a drug that is more than the body can tolerate. Ice overdose can cause:

- Breathing problems
- Fits or uncontrolled jerking
- Extreme agitation, confusion, clumsiness
- Sudden, severe headache
- Unconsciousness
- Stroke, heart attack and in some cases, death

## After taking ice

It can take several days for your child, sibling or friend to come down from ice. In that time, they may experience:

- Difficulty sleeping
- Twitching arms and legs during sleep
- Paranoia, hallucinations and confusion
- Irritation or depression
- Short-term memory loss

Physical withdrawal symptoms will generally settle down after a week, but emotional symptoms and the psychological craving for the 'high' may last for several months.

# YOU ARE NOT ALONE

It's very important to seek support for yourself, your family and friendship circle whilst on the road to recovery. Take steps to look after your own physical and emotional wellbeing:

- Talk with a friend
- Talk to a counsellor or GP
- Join a support group
- Meditation and mindfulness practice does help
- Make sure that your life does not focus exclusively on your family member's/friend's use of ice – try to cultivate a life outside of that

For printed copies or an accessible format of this brochure please phone 1300 85 85 84 or email [druginfo@adf.org.au](mailto:druginfo@adf.org.au)

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The information in this booklet is a guide only, not a substitute for advice from your doctor or other health professional. In an emergency call triple zero (000).

 [druginfo.adf.org.au](http://druginfo.adf.org.au)

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**WHAT DO I DO?** WHEN SOMEONE IS HAVING A BAD REACTION TO ICE

**1 Stay CALM**

**2 Reassure and be supportive**

**3 Dial 000** if you are concerned about their safety or your own



# ICE

## FAMILY & FRIENDS SUPPORT GUIDE

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## Having a family member or friend who uses ice places families under enormous strain.

However, it's important to realise that you are not alone and that help is available.



You can find information and support in this brochure or visit

**WWW.ADIN.COM.AU**



## WHAT YOU CAN DO TO HELP A LOVED ONE WHO USES ICE

Many of the most effective ways of helping a loved one who uses ice seem to go against natural reactions.

Condemning people, offering advice or trying to 'rescue' them are not productive. It can be challenging to fight your natural responses, so the following are helpful approaches to take:

### It helps just to listen

If your family member or friend wants to talk to you about their experiences with ice or explain why they use it, try to listen without interrupting, passing judgement or becoming upset.

When they've finished talking, repeat what they've said back to them in a calm voice. This demonstrates that you listened and helps clarify any misunderstandings.

Avoid offering advice or trying to solve their problems. Genuine, long-lasting change can only occur when people accept responsibility for their actions and take steps to deal with their use of ice.

### Encourage change

A person must decide for themselves when they want to stop or reduce their ice use. However, you may consider promoting and encouraging change by raising some of the following points when they are not affected by the drug and are feeling responsive:

- You've noticed they are using less ice and admire the effort and commitment this shows
- You value the time spent together when they aren't on ice

### Establish boundaries

Clearly communicate your own house rules and stand by them when tested. This isn't easy but change comes with consistency and safe boundaries for everyone.

## SEEK HELP

While there are many treatment options available to support users of ice, your child, sibling or friend must first be ready to seek help. Differing approaches can prove effective for people at different stages in the recovery process, so a focus on reducing consumption and harm is important.

Encourage your family to access the services listed below for advice and guidance.

*Pop out the card below*

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### SUPPORT, COUNSELLING AND REFERRAL

DirectLine **1800 888 236** [www.counsellingonline.org.au](http://www.counsellingonline.org.au)  
Australian Drug Foundation **1300 85 85 84**

**FOR MORE INFORMATION ON ICE FACTS:**

[www.adin.com.au/help-support-services](http://www.adin.com.au/help-support-services)