



How Do Drugs Affect The Respiratory System

[Drug use can impact the mind and body](#) in a variety of different ways. It's not uncommon for people to associate drug abuse with things like nausea, headaches, rapid heart rate, or even an increase in certain diseases. But, drugs can also play a big role in damaging the respiratory system.

The respiratory system is extremely complex and contains several different components, including:

- The mouth, nose, and nasal cavity
- The trachea
- The larynx
- The throat
- The bronchi
- The alveoli

Respiratory disorders, in general, aren't all that uncommon. Some are more serious than others, ranging from the common cold or asthma to conditions like lung cancer.

So, how can [drug abuse](#) affect the respiratory system in different ways? To answer that, we have to further break down different types of drugs, since they all can have a different impact.

Tobacco Products

When you think about drug use and respiratory issues, tobacco products are probably the first thing to come to mind. It's no secret to most people that smoking can increase your risk of developing respiratory conditions, including lung cancer, asthma, COPD, or even "smoker's cough," due to a build-up of carcinogens within the system.

Opioids

Opioids are one of the biggest issues in the nation right now when it comes to addiction. They can cause a variety of mental and physical health problems, but many people don't know how they can harm the respiratory system.

Some of the issues that can be caused by opioids include:

- Difficulty breathing
- Worsening existing respiratory issues
- A weakened immune system, making it easier to contract respiratory infections
- Fluid build-up in the lungs

Opioids are especially dangerous because of their addictive nature and because they can be taken in a variety of ways, including something as simple as popping a pill, or by snorting up a crushed pill as though it was cocaine. People certainly don't take any shortcuts when it comes to getting creative with opioid use.

If opioids are used on a long-term basis, they can even cause issues with oxygen levels in your blood, making it difficult for vital organs to get the oxygen they need in order to function properly.

Symptoms of Respiratory Conditions

Other drugs, including cocaine, inhalants, and even alcohol can all contribute to respiratory issues in different ways. But, since opioids and tobacco products are among the most popular drugs, it's important to understand just how they can affect you.

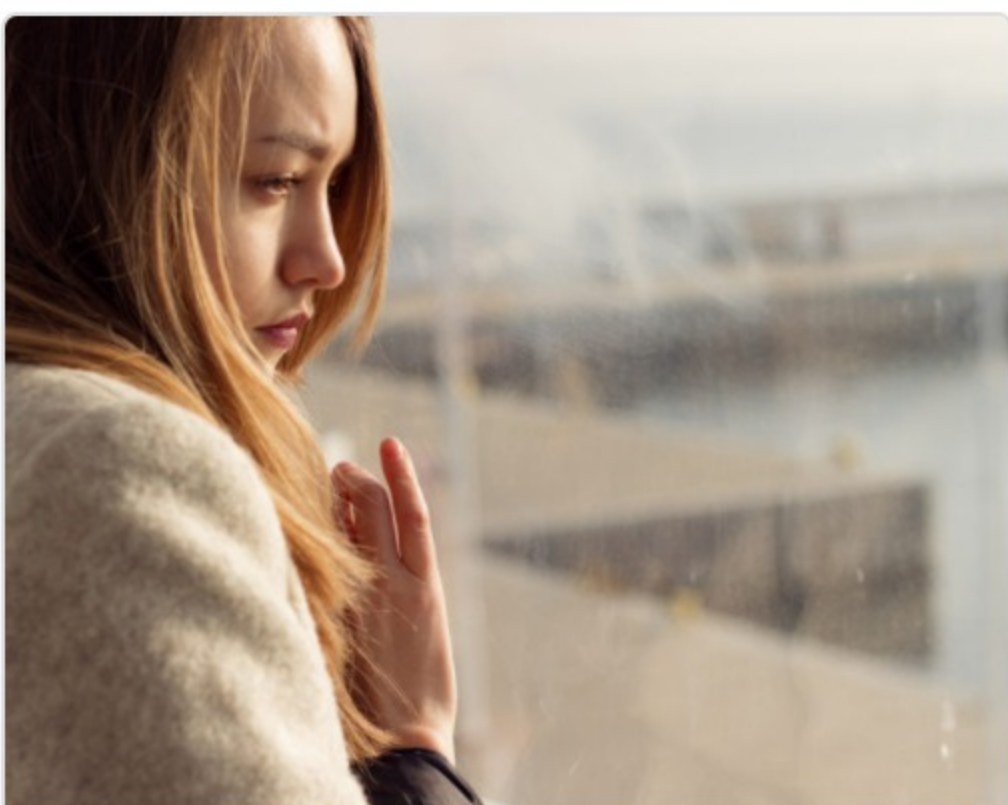
Respiratory issues can show up differently in everyone, but some of the most common signs include:

- Labored breathing
- Discolored skin around the mouth
- Crackling or whistling sounds when you breath
- "Grumbling" lungs

If you're experiencing any respiratory issues and you partake in any kind of drug use, understanding how the two might be connected can help you to seek out both the medical treatment you need, as well as the potential rehabilitation treatment to stop using drugs for good. Now only will it help to improve your respiratory health, but your overall mental and physical wellness.



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