How Addictive Is Methamphetamine? Impacts To Your Brain & Body

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By Robert Alexander Center

Are you wondering, how addictive is methamphetamine? The answer is simple:
Methamphetamine is very addictive, and if you use it regularly for even a short period of time, you could end up with addiction before you even know what is happening.
So many people who come to us for treatment have been quickly caught up in addiction. They start out by using it recreationally for an extra buzz at parties, but pretty soon they're seeking it out more and more often, and they can't stop.
This is not at all surprising because methamphetamine causes the body to build up a tolerance. When this happens, the person using the drug needs to take more and more of it to get as high as they did last time, which means they can very quickly get to a point where their usage is out of control. Many people will resort to eating, smoking, or even injecting meth in a bid to get a faster, stronger high, which is not a good position to be in.
Many individuals who attempt to quit methamphetamine use will experience various symptoms of withdrawal, which can be extremely uncomfortable, and which may include the following:

- Being extremely fatigued but unable to sleep (or get enough sleep)
- Depression
- Nervousness
- Anxiety
- Intense methamphetamine cravings

and/or you have experienced any of the symptoms above, it is likely that you have developed a methamphetamine addiction, and you will most likely need support to overcome your addiction.

What are the impacts of methamphetamine addiction on your body?

When you are addicted to methamphetamine, your body may undergo a number of changes, including the following:

In the short-term

If you are using methamphetamine, in the short term, you may notice the following effects on your body:

- Low or no appetite
- Intense alertness and activity
- Irregular heartbeat
- Faster than usual heart rate
- High blood pressure
- Unusually high temperature
- An attention boost
- Euphoria

In the long-term

If you continue to use methamphetamine and become addicted, the impact on your body could be as follows:

- Addiction
- Rapid and extreme weight loss
- Insomnia
- Mood swings and violent behavior
- Extreme dental issues including tooth decay, also known as meth mouth
- Psychotic episodes where you see and hear things that are not real
- Sores and extremely itchy skin
- Memory loss
- Emotional issues
- Brain fog
- Extreme paranoia

As you can see, when casual meth use becomes an addiction, the impact on your body can be severe and long-lasting, even after you have given up your use of the substance, which is why you should, if you can, stop before you are addicted, and get help as soon as possible if you think you may already have developed an addiction.

Impacts of Methamphetamine Addiction on Your Brain

All drugs act on the brain and change the way it works. They do this by changing how nerve cells communicate with each other. Nerve cells, or neurons, send out messages to one another via the release of chemicals known as neurotransmitters which direct our behavior. They do this by attaching to a type of neuron known as receptors.
There are various neurotransmitters in the body, but it is dopamine which is usually responsible for addictions because it reinforces the cravings your brain has for pleasurable experiences, whether that be eating a piece of chocolate, checking your social media account, or taking a drug like methamphetamine.
When you take methamphetamine regularly, it can cause havoc to your brain's dopamine system, reducing the amount of pleasure you are able to get from everyday activities like eating cake or exercising, as well as the high you get from the drug itself. This can lead to you building up a tolerance to the drug, which means you will have to take more of it each time to get the same level of high you are used to. This is how addictions happen, and why you should seek help as soon as possible.

How can The Robert Alexander Center for Recovery Help?

If you, or someone you care about, is struggling with a methamphetamine addiction, and you want to get help, we offer a number of inpatient and intensive outpatient treatment options, which include monitored detoxification from the drug.
Friendly and compassionate, we use evidence-based techniques to support you through the detoxification process both physically and mentally. If you want to get well, get in touch with us and we will do everything in our power to help.

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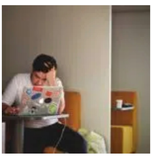

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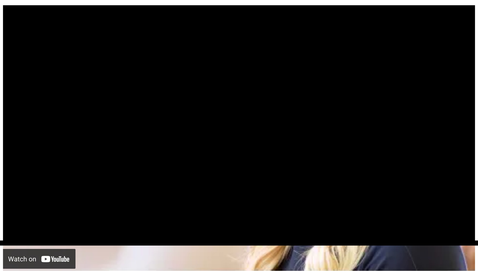
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