

Self-administration of gross overdoses of amphetamine-like products either orally, by inhalation or by intravenous injection represent a second and extremely hazardous form of abuse. Such activities are restricted preponderantly to members of our "drug culture". Individuals who employ large doses of amphetamine, methamphetamine or similar drugs usually abuse other central nervous system drugs including alcohol, opiates, barbiturates and marihuana. It seems that any mechanism that can provide them with a means of escape from the expectations and impingements of society, their conscience and even consciousness, is subject to adaption by these individuals. Amphetamines are valued because of a "rush" sensation produced particularly when injected. The exhilaration experienced reportedly resembles a sexual release. Cardiovascular and CNS side effects are of course magnified and it is difficult to understand how any degree of pleasure can compensate for the associated unpleasantness. I've only seen the results of acute amphetamine abuse on one occasion during a day long visit at the home of a university professor, a psychologist by training. On arrival in the morning, his wife appeared to be floating on air. She remained that way until shortly before our departure in the evening, when she collapsed into a deep sleep. During the day she would not or could not maintain a given conversation or sit for any length of time. She was inordinately garrulous and obviously edgy. This response was purportedly the result of sniffing a quantity of dextro-amphetamine.