

# Swallow

**Eating is probably the simplest and oldest method of taking drugs.**

**The drug is absorbed through the lining of the stomach and small intestine, then enters the bloodstream. The blood then carries the drug through the liver, where some of it will be eliminated, before it is passed through the heart and on to the brain. The effects of the drug, using this method, may not be felt for up to 45 minutes, depending on stomach contents.**

**Powdered drugs are usually wrapped in tissue paper before being swallowed, known as bombing or parachuting. Alternatively, the powder could be added to a hot drink and swallowed.**

## **THE RISKS**

- > Because it takes time to digest the drugs, dose is difficult to control. The problem is that by the time the drugs begin to work, there is a backlog of drugs still waiting to get to the brain. If you continued to take drugs until you felt an effect, you could have already taken too much and risk overdose.
- > Some stimulant drugs will reduce blood supply to the gut, starving it of oxygen. This can cause ulcers and perforation of the stomach or intestines.
- > The long-term risks of using drugs in this way can include damage to the stomach, intestines, liver and kidneys. The liver is particularly at risk and can suffer progressive and irreversible damage from excessive use of drugs. If you already have liver damage, don't do drugs.

## **REDUCE THE RISKS**

- > Start low and slow, take a small amount and wait. Don't take more because you can't feel anything happening when you expect it to. It could be a different substance or a different strength from last time. Be patient, give it time to work. Don't overload your system with more substances. Learn to recognise, and handle, the effects.
- > Eat something before you swallow drugs, as this will help reduce the damage to the stomach.
- > Some liquid drugs, such as GBL, can irritate and burn the soft tissue of the throat. They should never be taken unless they have been diluted. Some liquids, like poppers, should never be swallowed.

# Snort

**Snorting drugs into the nose causes the substance to be absorbed through the nasal membranes into capillaries and into the bloodstream.**

**The blood carries the substance through the heart and on to the brain, where the effects start after a few minutes.**

**The effects will start faster, be more intense and finish sooner with a harder come down than if the drug is eaten.**

**Snorting drugs causes the blood vessels in the nose to constrict, reducing the amount of oxygen in the nasal membranes. To help reduce the damage the nose produces a sticky substance called mucous (snot). This can sometimes be felt as a drip at the back of your throat and a runny nose.**

**The more you snort, the more the blood vessels close, the more mucous your nose produces and less of the drug is absorbed. So, the more you snort the less you get!**

## THE RISKS

- > Snorting stimulant-type drugs restricts the flow of blood to the inside of the nose. This, plus the corrosive qualities of the drug, or what it is cut with, can lead to nose bleeds and permanent damage to the inside of the nose.
- > Irritation, damage and bleeding inside the nose means sharing any form of snorting tube makes it easier to pass on any viruses, such as hepatitis C. It only needs a microscopic amount of blood, too small to be seen by the naked eye, on the end of a tube to transmit a virus from one person to another.
- > Certain substances, particularly some of the new and emerging drugs which use corrosive chemicals in their preparation, can be particularly damaging to the nose and should not be snorted.
- > Some drugs can have completely different effects with a small difference in the amount you use. This is easy to get wrong when snorting and can lead to unwanted and dangerous results.

## REDUCE THE RISKS

- > Flush your nose with water after each session or line, this will help reduce the harm caused by the corrosive effects of the drugs. Use a nasal spray or simply cup some water in your hands and snort the water, then blow your nose.
- > Powder that is chopped as fine as possible will cause less damage to the nose and is easier to absorb.
- > Don't share snorting tubes or bank notes. Use your own and stick to it, or use the end of a key or your finger.