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"ICE"

Crystal Methamphetamine

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General History

Methamphetamine is a form of amphetamine, a stimulant. Stimulants are compounds which affect the central nervous system by accelerating its activities.

Stimulants are either natural, such as Epinephrine and Norepinephrine, or synthetic such as Amphetamine and Phenmetrazine. The first natural stimulant was Epinephrine (adrenalin) and the effects were first described in 1899. The first synthetic stimulant of any significance was prepared in 1919 by a Japanese chemist and was later identified at Methamphetamine.

Amphetamine was first synthesized in the 19th Century but was not widely used medically until the 1930's when it was introduced as a treatment for narcolepsy and as an ingredient in decongestant inhalers. Its properties as a stimulant caused the use of amphetamine to grow steadily in the 40's through the 70's where it was used for a number of problems including depression, lethargy, and fatigue. According to sources, Methamphetamine was used by soldiers in the Korean army during World War II. This enabled them to continue fighting for long periods of time with very limited rest and food consumption. These drugs reached great popularity in the 60's and 70's when used in diet pills.

Today the legal use of Amphetamine is limited to the treatment of narcolepsy (a rare disorder resulting in an uncontrollable desire for sleep), peritonic behavioral disorders in children, and certain cases of obesity.

Methamphetamine is the strongest stimulant of the amphetamine group and is available in pharmaceutical tablets, under the trade name "Desoxyn" (Refer to PDR, edition 40, 1986, Abbot laboratories, photo-page 403, description-page 513). It is listed as a Schedule II drug under Division 10 of the California Uniform Controlled Substances Act.

Methamphetamine has often been called the "poorman's cocaine" and has traditionally been the drug of choice of Outlaw Motorcycle gangs. Commonly called "Meth", "Crystal" or "Crank" (powder form).

"ICE"

"Ice" is in the form of a translucent crystal similar in appearance to "rock candy" or "rock salt". In terms of the molecular structure of "Ice", there is no difference whatsoever. It is still methamphetamine hydrochloride and thus falls under the same controlled substance

CAN BE REPRODUCED

schedule, schedule II (sections 11377, 11378, 11379 and 11379.6 of the Health and Safety code). "Ice", very common to Hawaii, is a very pure form of Methamphetamine (98%-100% purity).

"Crystal Meth" or "Ice" first appeared in Hawaii during 1985 but was not recognized as a problem until 1987. During that time, local Filipino gang members were the principal distributors for "Ice".

How is it Carried and Used?

Common carriers for Methamphetamine are opaque glass vials, paper bindles, or more commonly in Honolulu, clear heat sealed cellophane packets. Common paraphernalia include syringes for the user who injects his/her drugs or glass smoking pipes (bongs).

There is a difference between a pipe used for cocaine and that used by a Meth smoker. The basic difference is in the construction of the pipe. Refer to attachment "A" for an illustration of the differences in the construction of these pipes.

The cocaine pipe is made of two sections, one to hold the cocaine and the other section to hold a liquid coolant. The sections are separated by a screen or similar object. Cocaine smokers will ignite the cocaine in the top half of the glass pipe. The fumes are then inhaled, first through the coolant chamber and then into the mouth.

The "Meth" or "Ice" pipe has only one section where the Methamphetamine is placed and heated. There are no screens and no coolants in the Meth pipe. The pipes used for smoking Meth usually have a hole on the top of the bowl leading to the main chamber and may have a vent hole on the stem between the chamber, where the crystal is placed, and the mouthpiece.

The "Ice" is first placed into the chamber and heated with a lighter or other heat source until it turns to a gas. The opening in the chamber and vent hole are sealed, usually with a finger, while the crystal is being heated. Once the crystal has turned to gas, it is inhaled by the user. A telltale sign of a Meth user are burn marks on the finger(s) used to seal the hole in the main chamber.

Methamphetamine powder can be injected, inhaled, smoked or taken orally. In the Honolulu area, the most common method to ingest "Ice" has been to smoke the drug using a glass pipe. See attached illustration for a Meth pipe. It is said that a person can obtain approximately 10-15 hits from 1 gram of "Ice".

Honolulu Street Information

Information gathering in the Honolulu area reports that several forms of crystal methamphetamine are being used. Most prevalent is the translucent or clear rock crystal. This form of methamphetamine is said to be water based and burns quickly leaving a milky white residue on the inside of the bowl. Reports also show that a yellowish crystal methamphetamine is also available. This form of methamphetamine is said to be oil based. This form of yellow methamphetamine is also said to burn slower and last longer leaving behind a brownish or black residue in the pipe.

"Ice" has surpassed cocaine as the drug of choice in Hawaii, and is currently selling for the following prices:

1 Gram	Low - \$250.00	Average - \$350.00	High - \$400.00
3.5 Gram/8 ball		\$900.00	- \$1200.00
1/4 Oz. Bag		\$1900.00	- \$3000.00
1/2 Oz. Bag		\$4000.00	- \$5000.00
1 Oz. Bag		\$5200.00	- \$7000.00
(Not normally sold in larger quantities)			

"Ice" is reportedly being smuggled from the Far East (specifically Thailand, Hong Kong, and Korea), by way of Canada. Drugs are then smuggled to Seattle (WA), then to Portland (OR) and finally to Honolulu (HI). While "Ice" is being sold in the majority of the Hawaiian Islands, it is predominantly being sold and used on the Island of Oahu.

Hazards and Effects

Users feel an intense wave of physical and psychological exhilaration. The effects of the drug may last from 2 to 14 hours, depending on the dosage. Although entering the bloodstream rapidly, large doses may be excreted into the urine, unchanged, up to 72 hours after ingestion. Methamphetamine use tends to keep the user awake and alert and provides temporary mood elevation and continued use caused the body to deplete its stored energy. This lack of sleep/rest prevents the replenishment of these reserves. Insomnia is usually followed by sleeping for long periods of time.

Physical Effects - The drug tends to overtax the body and causes the body to literally burn itself up. Vitamin and mineral deficiencies are common due to inadequate nutrition as the user keeps pushing beyond what the body can tolerate and may lead to a rapid and noticeable loss of weight. There is lowered resistance to disease and prolonged use will cause damage to organs, particularly to the lungs, liver, and kidneys.

Psychological Effects - Continued use of Methamphetamine can cause a heavy degree of psychological dependence on the drug which leads to a psychotic state, insomnia, anxiety, depression, and fatigue. Toxic psychosis similar to paranoid schizophrenia can result from heavy short or long term use as well as delusional states. Prolonged use can also produce a heavy degree of psychological tolerance and users find they have to use heavier dosages.

Withdrawal - Does not involve physical discomfort but can involve acute depression and fatigue. Depression can reach critical proportions, since life seems boring and unpleasant. Progressive toxic effects of amphetamine abuse may include restlessness, tremor, talkativeness, irritability, insomnia, anxiety, delirium, panic states, paranoid ideation, palpitation, cardiac arrhythmias, hypertension, circulatory collapse, drymouth, nausea, vomiting, abdominal cramps, convulsions, coma, and **DEATH**.

Other dangers include rapid deterioration of physical and psychological health since methamphetamine erases feelings of periods of time and create the same sort of stress to the body that any long period of exertion creates, however, the user does not let his body recuperate and permanent damage or death is the result.

Community - As of August, 1989 a survey of all new born infants in Hawaii showed 25% of them to have traces of Crystal Methamphetamine in their systems. Queens Hospital is averaging approximately a half dozen Methamphetamine overdoses a day compared to 1 a day last year.

What Makes "Ice" So Popular

Several factors are believed to contribute to the growing popularity of "Ice."

- "Ice" is similar in quality to, or better than, meth used for injection
- Smoking "Ice" eliminates the use of a needle
- The drug enters the body faster when it is smoked
- The drug's effects are long lasting when compared to other drugs (particularly in comparison to a cocaine "high" of about 20 minutes)
- "Ice" is often odorless, colorless and tasteless
- "Ice" is easy to transport
- "Ice" sells for more than cocaine but is much cheaper to produce

Has Ice Arrived on the Mainland?

Contact with law enforcement agencies in Oregon and Washington reveal very little contact or observation of Methamphetamine in "Ice" form. There was a 5 ounce seizure of "Ice" in Clackamas County, Oregon (a county just south of Portland). This "Ice" had been mailed to a U.S. Citizen from Korea. This subjects contact with Korea was through his Korean wife that he had met while stationed in Korea serving in the armed forces. There are very few sightings of the "Ice" substance in the northwest.

The Larkin Street Youth Center (a youth treatment center) in San Francisco and the Parkside Recovery Program in Concord, California, recently reported in a bay area newspaper, treatment of individuals using "Ice" in their respective areas. Lengthy discussion with both facilities, however, revealed that there have been many different forms of Methamphetamine being used by way of smoking but it is not clear if the form is "Ice".

In San Francisco for example, there has been several cases where individuals have been smoking meth-oil or the *base form* of Methamphetamine. It is reported that these individuals are taking the Meth powder, placing it into water and adding baking soda (a

mild base). This changes the pH and the result is a slimy oil that is being called "Snot" by the users. This form is said to cause an even longer high than in the "Ice" form due possibly to the oil or "Snot" being *basic* and remaining in the user's fatty tissues longer than the hydrochloride.

So far "Ice" has been a Korean phenomena, produced in labs in Korea and Japan and distributed in the Philippines and Hawaii. Let's all hope the clandestine lab operators on the west coast are not successful in exacting the crystallization process.

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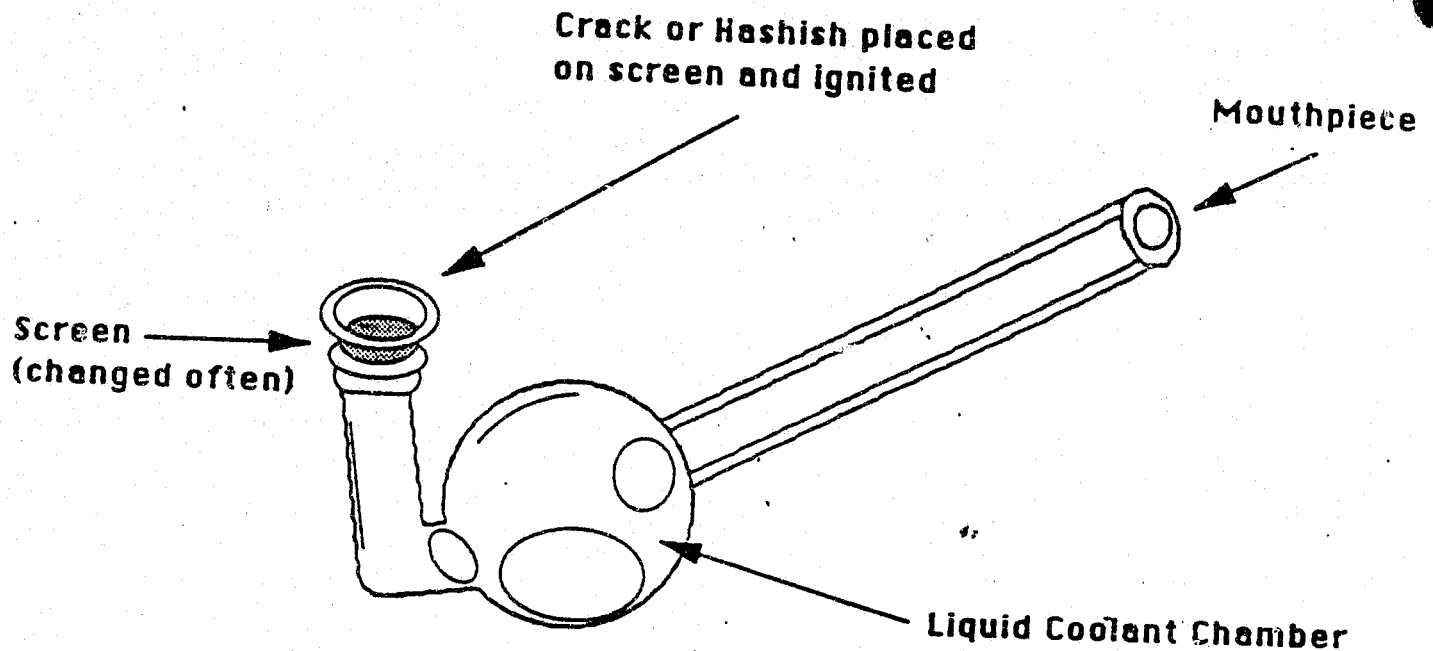
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CRACK-PIPE (GLASS)



METHAMPHETAMINE PIPE (GLASS)

