



Looking after you ...
 Keeping you informed ...
 Keeping you up to date.

Drugs: It starts off fun - then can turn very dark

Zol. Charlie. Molly. Buttons. Brown sugar.

These street names might sound harmless. But drugs are dangerous. What starts as a way to escape or have fun can quickly take over your life.



What are drugs?

Drugs are substances, besides food or water, that change your physical and mental state. They affect:

- how your brain works.
- what you feel, see, hear or taste.
- how you behave.

Types of drugs and what they do

Stimulants

- Speed up messages between brain and body to boost energy and alertness.
- Lead to faster heart rate, rising blood pressure, nervousness and lack of sleep.
- Large doses cause anxiety, panic, stomach cramps and seizures.

Examples: Cocaine, MDMA (ecstasy), methamphetamine (crystal meth/tik), caffeine, nicotine.

Hallucinogens

- Change how you see, hear, feel, taste or smell things.
- Create a sense of numbness and a feeling of floating, but also confusion and disorientation.
- Large doses lead to paranoia, panic and memory loss.

Examples: Ketamine, LSD, cannabis (marijuana), psilocybin (magic mushrooms).

Depressants

- Slow down messages between brain and body for relaxation.
- Decrease reaction time, coordination, concentration and inhibitions.
- Large doses result in vomiting, sleepiness and unconsciousness.

Examples: Tranquilisers, heroin, cannabis, codeine, alcohol.

Addiction: When it becomes a problem

Ask yourself:

- Do I need it to get through the day?
- Do I lie about how much I use?
- Is it messing up my work, family or money?
- Do I feel sick when I stop?

If you say “yes” to any of these, talk to someone. You can visit na.org.za or contact your **employee wellness programme**.

Source: SAPS Drug Awareness

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