



**Dealing  
with ice  
and  
speed**

# BroS &Sis

## Dealing with ice and speed

Speed, and the much stronger 'ice', can make your brother or sister aggressive, unpredictable, erratic and sometimes even psychotic. It can be scary dealing with someone taking ice or speed. Here's some information and tips about ice and speed to help you deal with your brother or sister. You could use this to help recognise if your brother or sister might be using ice or speed.

What happens the moment a person uses speed or ice?

Ice makes a person feel temporarily happy, excited and confident.

Ice is a stimulant. It speeds you up. Your brother or sister may be more energetic, talkative, restless. They may have tremors and increased breathing and sweating. They may also itch, scratch and pick at their bodies.

Ice makes people very emotional. It can make your brother or sister anxious and paranoid.

Ice can make people violent for no reason, irritable, aggressive and hostile.

Using ice can lead to psychosis. They might believe they have special powers. They might see things that don't exist, or have extreme jealousy. It might sometimes be hard to understand what your brother or sister is saying.

Ice can make it hard to sleep. It can also lead to headaches, reduced appetite and nausea.

Ice can lead to your brother or sister having work, relationship, money or legal problems.

Withdrawing or coming down off ice can be difficult. As the effects of ice wear off, your brother or sister may get depressed, become tense, violent, exhausted and have huge mood swings. They might have restless sleep, and may be quite distressed. These symptoms can last for 1-3 months.

Ice is very addictive. Ice users will focus more and more on how to obtain the pleasure and escape that the drug provides. This can become more important than all other aspects of their life. Ice changes the

brain to make people crave the drug, and it can be very difficult to give up or cut down ice use.

There are many long-term effects of using ice. These include heart disease, malnutrition, sleeping problems, depression and anxiety, brain damage, and contraction of viruses after sharing injecting equipment.

What to do if your brother or sister is using ice/speed?

If your brother or sister is violent or aggressive or you feel unsafe, get out of the situation and call the police if you have to.

Warn them against using ice. Compared to many other drugs, ice leads to more dangerous, unpredictable and damaging behaviour.

Communicate openly about how they can use ice in a safer way. They could:  
Try a small taste or a small amount first to judge the strength of the mix when they buy a new batch of ice. This might also allow them to tell if it's been cut with other substances

like talcum powder. It's also not a good idea to mix ice with other drugs. Alcohol and caffeine make you more dehydrated and overwork the liver. It's also dangerous to rely on downers (eg. Valium or alcohol) to cope with the bad effects of ice or speed. This can lead to a 'roller coaster' dependence on several different drugs. If they're injecting, never share needles or injecting equipment and always use a clean needle for each shot. Use less. This isn't entirely true – particularly for people who have been using a long time – they build a tolerance to the drug. Smaller amounts give about the same effect, but reduce the risk of addiction.

Take ice or speed orally. It's safer than snorting, smoking or injecting, because the stomach is better at handling acidic substances than the

lungs, veins and nose. You're more likely to overdose from injecting. Try to carry condoms, as ice use can impair judgement and lead to unsafe sex.

Let them know about the treatment options. Treatments include counselling, group therapy, withdrawal (detoxification) and medication. Residential, supervised/home withdrawal and "out-patient" programs are available. For advice you can call Family Drug Help, ADIS or DirectLine (numbers at the end of this sheet). Also, see the 'treatment' fact sheet.

Let them know about the risk of overdose.

Overdosing on speed or ice can lead to:

- psychosis.
- heart attack (very rare).
- death (very rare).

If they overdose:

If your brother or sister is not aggressive and you feel safe, call an ambulance or drive them to a hospital. If they are aggressive or you feel unsafe, call the police.

Helpful phone numbers.

Directline/ADIS, Drug advice –1800 888 236.

Family drug helpline, Support and Advice – 1300 660 068.