

In 2008 there have been approximately 31 overdoses of drugs in the Michigan City area. Some of these overdoses have led to death. Unfortunately, recently we have witnessed an increase in the use of Heroin in the Michigan City area. It is not just older drug users using Heroin.

Teenagers are experimenting and becoming addicted to Heroin. It appears a lot of the younger Heroin users are under the false assumption if you smoke or sniff/ snort the Heroin it is not as bad as injecting it. Today, heroin is an illicit substance having no medical utility in the United States. It is in [Schedule I](#) of the Controlled Substance Act. Some of the street terms for Heroin are "H", Boy, Smack, Thunder, Hell dust, and Nose drops

Heroin is an illegal, highly addictive drug. It is both the most abused and the most rapidly acting of the opiates. Heroin is processed from morphine, a naturally occurring substance extracted from the seed pod of certain varieties of poppy plants. It is typically sold in this area as a white or brownish powder. Although purer heroin is becoming more common, most street heroin is "cut" with other drugs or with substances such as sugar, starch, powdered milk, or quinine. Street heroin can also be cut with strychnine, fentanyl or other poisons. Because heroin abusers do not know the actual strength of the drug or its true contents, they are at risk of overdose or death. Heroin also poses special problems because of the transmission of HIV and other diseases that can occur from sharing needles or other injection equipment.

Heroin can be injected, smoked, or sniffed/snorted. Injection is the most efficient way to administer low-purity heroin. The availability of high-purity heroin and the fear of infection by sharing needles has made snorting and smoking the drug more common. National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) researchers has confirmed **that all forms of heroin administration are addictive.**

Intravenous users typically experience the rush within 7 to 8 seconds after injection, while intramuscular injection produces a slower onset of this euphoric feeling, taking 5 to 8 minutes. When heroin is sniffed or smoked, the peak effects of the drug are usually felt within 10 to 15 minutes. In addition to the initial feeling of euphoria, the short-term effects of heroin include a warm flushing of the skin, dry mouth, and heavy extremities. **Heroin laced with fentanyl and other poisons have been known to cause death within hours.**

One of the most significant effects of heroin use is addiction. With regular heroin use, tolerance to the drug develops. Once this happens, the abuser must use more heroin to achieve the same intensity or effect that they are seeking. As higher doses of the drug are used over time, physical dependence and addiction to the drug develop.

Chronic users may develop collapsed veins, infection of the heart lining and valves, abscesses, cellulites, and liver disease. Pulmonary complications, including various types of pneumonia, may result from the poor health condition of the abuser, as well as from heroin's depressing effects on respiration. In addition to the effects of the drug itself, street heroin may have additives that do not really dissolve and result in clogging the blood vessels that lead to the lungs, liver, kidneys, or brain. This can cause infection or even death of small patches of cells in vital organs.

Withdrawal, which in regular abusers may occur as early as a few hours after the last administration, produces drug craving, restlessness, muscle and bone pain, insomnia, diarrhea and vomiting, cold flashes with goose bumps ("cold turkey"), kicking movements ("kicking the habit"), and other symptoms. Major withdrawal symptoms peak between 48 and 72 hours after the last dose and subside after about a week. Sudden withdrawal by heavily dependent users

who are in poor health is occasionally fatal, although heroin withdrawal is considered less dangerous than alcohol or barbiturate withdrawal

So far in 2008 the MCPD Narcotics Division has arrested 11 people that are involved in the illegal distribution of Heroin. Our efforts are continuing with several ongoing investigations. Chief Ben Neitzel and the Michigan City Police Dept asks the public to continue to help us address this serious issue by calling the **Drug Tip Hotline 219-873-1488** with any information on illegal drug sales or use in our community.

Respectfully,

D/Cpl David Legros

MCPD Narcotics Division Commander