Ecstasy Myths

Myth: MDMA’s colour and appearance is indicative of the pill’s contents

Conversely, the colour and/or appearance of any ecstasy pill is completely meaningless. Ecstasy pills are bought and sold on the black market in varying colours and dosages. Law enforcement officials have gone undercover to investigate the colour, consistency and appearance of Ecstasy directly in its natural habitat. Their research has led to the conclusion that Ecstasy can come in all types of forms.

Myth: Ecstasy can burn holes in a person’s brain

This is somewhat comical if you really think about it. MDMA does not burn holes in a user’s brain. The reality is that Ecstasy does have an effect on the brain – it lowers levels of neurotransmitters responsible for regulating emotions and sleep patterns. This discovery may have been misconstrued and turned into a rumour that blows the reality of its affects out of proportion. Research has proven that Ecstasy causes degeneration of neurons containing the neurotransmitter dopamine. “Damage to these neurons is the underlying cause of the motor disturbances seen in Parkinson’s disease. Symptoms of this disease begin with lack of coordination and tremors and can eventually result in a form of paralysis,” reports a renowned drug addiction website.

Myth: Ecstasy contains heroin

Ecstasy does not contain heroin. The Vaults of Erowid, an online forum, offers information on drug use and abuse. The author affirms the message that Ecstasy containing heroin is a rumour with a limited factual basis. “Although heroin has been detected in a couple of ecstasy pills since the late 1990s and fentanyl was detected in two pills in 2005, there is no reason to believe that heroin or related opiates are present in enough ecstasy pills to warrant the concerns expressed by some inexperienced ecstasy users.” The Good Drugs Guide goes on to explain how the rumour came to fruition in the first place. It also further confirms Erowid’s anecdote: “Speed and Ketamine have been found in ecstasy on different occasions. Ketamine’s groggy, dissociative effects are often reminiscent of feelings one experiences when using heroin, a fact that has helped perpetuate the rumour.” Thus, there are a few different entities that have been fuelling the rumour that “Ecstasy contains heroin”.

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Myth: Ecstasy addiction occurs only in individuals with weak moral backgrounds and the inability to stay within disciplinary guidelines

Ecstasy addiction is not a matter of willpower or morality. It is a disease, in the sense that it is an obsession of the mind, a spiritual malady, and a physical craving. All three components feed off of each other and contribute to the downward spiral that addiction often entails. The addict finds that he or she loses control of thoughts and behaviours, as the compulsion to abuse Ecstasy overtakes previously normal and routine tendencies. For instance, a rational person sans the disease of addiction knows that taking illegal drugs and subsequently getting behind the wheel of a car is a poor decision that is unsafe and therefore unacceptable. Someone who is suffering from the disease of addiction, however, has lost the knack to pay credence to the thoughts derived from the brain’s logical portion. The hemisphere that controls rational, logical behaviour has been compromised by the compulsive power that presents itself as an addiction to Ecstasy. Addiction is coercive and insidious and will find a way to overpower the addict’s balanced thoughts, often at the individual’s expense.

Myth: Rehab for Ecstasy addiction lasts only a few weeks

Some people assume that because Ecstasy is an illegal drug and is not as common as marijuana or alcohol, it requires less treatment time as compared to more “mainstream” drugs. This is simply untrue. Transitions Recovery Program in Florida posts facts that hold true for other rehab centres across the globe as well: “Drug treatment programs offer access to a continuum of care that provides the intensity of therapy appropriate throughout each stage of recovery, from extended residential care to lifetime after-care services. The individual program incorporates leading forms of therapy that have proven effective in addressing underlying causes of drug use, dual diagnosis, issues with family, employers, school and the legal system.” Dual diagnosis situations are common with substance abusers. For example, a teen may be enrolled in an inpatient treatment centre for Ecstasy addiction and discover with the help of staff members that underlying the addiction is clinical depression. The respective inpatient treatment team will then design the treatment regimen to address both the depression and the disease of addiction throughout the client’s stay. As always, an aftercare plan is a crucial component of a successful treatment stint. Without a relapse prevention plan, the Ecstasy addict is vulnerable to relapse upon discharging the facility.

Myth: Ecstasy drug treatment doesn’t work

Again, this is a complete myth. Studies have shown that drug rehab centres treatments “reduced substance use by over 40 to 60%, dramatically decreased criminal activities, and improved employment prospects,” states an international, government funded website on drugs and addiction. Drug rehabilitation centres have been created specifically to treat addiction. They start by addressing the physical symptoms associated with withdrawal from Ecstasy and then integrate psychological and emotional counselling into the client’s treatment regimen. Through the drug treatment program, clients can begin to live again. They will form new habits and adopt a lifestyle that is not conducive to drugs, raves, all-night parties, and dangerous behaviours. While attending an inpatient treatment program, every Ecstasy addict will be taught how to shift their perspective on previous events that may have contributed to the birth of their addiction. They will learn how to have fun in sobriety. All elements of this new lifestyle are reinforced in a tranquil, safe environment, which is why rehabilitation centres are recommended for many different types of addicts across the
board. Intensive psychotherapy will be followed up by an aftercare plan that the patient has a part in configuring. Every client is treated on a case-by-case basis to ensure quality of care. The allegory that rehab centers do not work for Ecstasy addicts holds little factual merit.