

If you are wondering if someone you care about might be using drugs, this guide may be useful in recognizing physical, behavioral and emotional characteristics.

Personality

Becomes disrespectful—is verbally and physically abusive
Is angry a lot, acts paranoid or confused, or suffers from extreme mood swings
Seems depressed and less out-going than usual
Is secretive and lies about what he is doing and where he is going
Is stealing or “losing” possessions he used to value
Seems to have a lot of money, or is always asking for money
Withdraws from the family and family activities

Physical Appearance

Not taking care of hygiene and grooming
Not sleeping or sleeping too much
Loss of appetite
Weight loss or weight gain
Too hyperactive or too little energy

Social Activity / School Performance

Drops old friends and activities
Is skipping school
Loses interest in school work and is getting low grades
Is sleeping in class
Loses concentration and is having trouble remembering things

Signs

Narcotics: Lethargy, drowsiness, euphoria, nausea, constipation, constricted pupils, slowed breathing

Hallucinogens: Trance-like state, excitation, euphoria, increased pulse rate, insomnia, hallucinations

Alcohol: Slurred speech, impaired judgment and motor skills, incoordination, confusion, tremors, drowsiness, agitation, nausea and vomiting, respiratory ailments, depression

Depressants: Drowsiness, confusion, incoordination, tremors, slurred speech, depressed pulse rate, shallow respiration, dilated pupils

Cocaine/Crack Cocaine: Excitability, euphoria, talkativeness, anxiety, increased pulse rate, dilated pupils, paranoia, agitation, hallucinations

Inhalants: Slurred speech, incoordination, nausea, vomiting, slowed breathing

Marijuana: Mood swings, euphoria, slow thinking and reflexes, dilated pupils, increased appetite, dryness of mouth, increased pulse rate, delusions, hallucinations

Stimulants: Excitability, tremors, insomnia, sweating, dry mouth and lips, bad breath, dilated pupils, weight loss, paranoia, hallucinations

Tobacco: Smelly hair, clothes, and breath; yellowing of teeth; coughs; increased asthma attacks; shortness of breath and poorer athletic performance. After only a few weeks, users of spit tobacco can develop cracked lips, white spots, sores, and bleeding in the mouth

Source: SAMHSA (Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration)