

Cocaine Is Not What It's Cracked Up To Be!

Some general information about cocaine:

- ☠ Cocaine is a chemical derived from leaves of the *Erythroxylum coca* plant that grows in the Andes Mountain region of South America.
- ☠ It acts by enhancing certain chemicals in the brain (dopamine, norepinephrine and serotonin).
- ☠ Just about 5 million US residents use cocaine. One in six become dependent on it.
- ☠ About 650,000 receive special treatment for this per year.
- ☠ Cocaine is the most commonly used illegal drug associated with emergency room visits (a half a million per year) often for chest pain, stroke and heart attacks.
- ☠ Cocaine is associated with a high use of other substances and with psychiatric disorders.
- ☠ It is often used with opiates / narcotics ("speedballing") to get a greater high.
- ☠ When used with alcohol, another chemical, cocaethylene, is formed which is like cocaine but lasts longer and may contribute to more severe toxic effects.
- ☠ Immediate effects include euphoria, increased energy, decreased appetite and need for sleep.
- ☠ Bad effects include anxiety, irritability, paranoia, impaired judgement, and psychotic symptoms. It also may cause increase in heart rate, blood pressure, stomach ulcers, perforations (holes), bowel infarctions (areas of bowel death) and risk of strokes, heart attacks and sudden death.
- ☠ Long term use can lead to sleep problems, weight loss, agitation, tremor, movement disorders, problems with heart rhythm, sweating, nausea and feelings of bugs crawling under the skin. Also, one may experience sinus problems and holes in the nasal septum from snorting.
- ☠ Long term use is also associated with cognitive impairment (reduced memory and judgement), poor attention, suicidal feelings and suicide attempts.
- ☠ Withdrawal symptoms may include depression, anxiety, fatigue, poor concentration, reduced pleasure in things that used to bring pleasure (anhedonia), increased sleep and sluggishness.
- ☠ Research shows that regular use is associated with actual changes in the brain itself.
- ☠ Some develop movement disorders ("dystonia" and "choreoathetosis") that some call "crack dancers".

Drug Proof Your Home:

- ✦ Children learn what is practiced in the home.
- ✦ Children who are loved unconditionally are less likely to seek relief from the pain of life through drugs.
- ✦ Instill in our children respect for our bodies as temples of God's Spirit and how to best care for it.
- ✦ Help our children to know that there is a consequence, good or bad, for every choice that we make.
- ✦ Teach children that our identity and worth don't come from the culture, what others think, what we own or do but from God alone.
- ✦ Encourage children to cultivate a close relationship with God as He is the source of power to overcome temptation.
- ✦ Talk to children early in life about the consequences of substance use at a level they can understand.
- ✦ Maintain awareness of the current trends and problems in the community.
- ✦ Always know your children's friends, their families and their whereabouts.
- ✦ Set CLEAR appropriate boundaries and consequences for your children.
- ✦ Rules without Relationship (love) often Results in Rebellion.

☞ **Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own; you were bought with a price. Therefore honor God with your body (1 Corinthians 6:19-20)**