
Inhalants



Inhalants

Inhalants are chemical vapours or gases that create a 'high' when breathed in.

They are absorbed in the lungs and then travel to the brain through the bloodstream.

Inhalants are everyday products that were not meant to be used as drugs.

They are chemicals developed for commercial, industrial or household use.

Are inhalants addictive?

Inhalants are addictive.

Those using inhalants regularly can develop a tolerance, meaning they need more and more to feel 'high'.

People who are addicted to inhalants may have withdrawal when they stop.

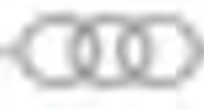
Symptoms may be tiredness, depression, anxiety, irritability, headaches and nausea.

Are inhalants dangerous?

Yes, inhalants are dangerous for a number of reasons:



- Most inhalants easily catch on fire
- Using inhalants near an open flame (like a lit cigarette) increases the risk of burns
- Sniffing inhalants for a long period of time can lead to Sudden Sniffing Death (SSD)
- Sudden Sniffing Death is caused by heart failure and can happen after only one sniffing session
- Solvents sniffed from a plastic bag can make the person pass out while the bag is still in place causing suffocation
- Long term use can damage a person's liver, kidneys, lungs, heart, brain and bones
- Long term use can also affect memory, coordination and the ability to learn
- Damage to the brain from inhalants may be permanent even if a person stops using



Inhalants and Pregnancy

It is safest not to use inhalants while pregnant.

This is because...

Inhalants have toxic substances in them which can cross the placenta and may cause the baby to be born too soon, have birth defects, or be stillborn.

Inhalants prevent oxygen from getting to the developing baby and cause the baby to not grow well and have a low birth weight.

A baby exposed to inhalants may have withdrawal at birth. This may look like:

- lots of high pitched crying
- sleeplessness
- tremours
- poor feeding
- 'floppy' muscles



A baby exposed to inhalants before birth may have a different smell.

This is because inhalants are released from the baby's lungs as they breath out.

Inhalants and Breastfeeding

It is not known what effects inhalants may have on a breastfed baby.

For this reason, if you are using inhalants do NOT breastfeed.

It is also not safe to breastfeed while experiencing a high from inhalants.

Using inhalants can affect the ability to take care of your baby.

If you are planning to use, have someone else take care of your baby.



Using Safer

If you are using inhalants there are ways to be safer.

- Use with a someone you trust in case you pass out
- Use less - this helps reduce the negative effects caused by inhalants
- Avoid inhaling more than once
- Find a safe and quiet place where you don't have to hurry
- Avoid mixing inhalants with other substances

Inhaling without taking a break can cause a person to pass out.



If someone passes out, call 911 right away!

Remove any bags from around their nose or mouth.

Roll the person on their side so they won't choke if they throw up.





What can I do if I use?

It may be a struggle to not use inhalants, but every little step you take helps you and your baby. Steps could be to:

- Talk to your health care provider about treatment for quitting
- Use less or use less often
- Find ways to use that keep you safer (page 2)
- Take care of your health



Taking care of yourself also helps take care of your baby.

Here are some things you can do:

- Attend your prenatal appointments
- Be active when you can, rest when you need
- Eat foods that you like that have lots of nutrients - vegetables and fruits, milk or milk alternatives, whole wheat grains, fish, meats and alternatives
- Drink lots of water
- Cut down or quit smoking cigarettes and drinking alcohol
- Reduce stress - talk with a friend, take a bath, go for a walk

You Are Not Alone!



Where To Find Help

There are lots of places that offer support and treatment.

Speak with a worker about which one may be right for you.

Addictions Foundation of Manitoba (AFM).....	204-944-6200
AFM Women's Centre and Family Program.....	204-944-6229
Aboriginal Health & Wellness.....	204-925-3700
Behavioural Health Foundation.....	204-269-3430
Insight Mentoring Program.....	204-925-3750
Klinik Crisis Line (24 hour).....	204-786-8686
Manitoba Addiction Treatment Centres.....	204-582-9050
Mothering Project, Mount Carmel Clinic, Intake Line.....	204-479-0203
Native Addictions Council of Manitoba.....	204-586-8395
River Point Centre.....	1-855-662-6605
Salvation Army- Anchorage Program.....	204-946-9401

