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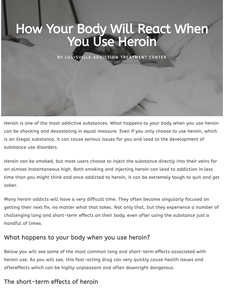

How Your Body Will React When You Use Heroin

BY LOUISVILLE ADDICTION TREATMENT CENTER

Heroin is one of the most addictive substances. What happens to your body when you use heroin can be shocking and devastating in equal measure. Even if you only choose to use heroin, which is an illegal substance, it can cause serious issues for you and lead to the development of substance use disorders.

Heroin can be smoked, but most users choose to inject the substance directly into their veins for an almost instantaneous high. Both smoking and injecting heroin can lead to addiction in less time than you might think and once addicted to heroin, it can be extremely tough to quit and get sober.

Many heroin addicts will have a very difficult time. They often become singularly focused on getting their next fix, no matter what that takes. Not only that, but they experience a number of challenging long and short-term effects on their body, even after using the substance just a handful of times.

What happens to your body when you use heroin?

Below you will see some of the most common long and short-term effects associated with heroin use. As you will see, this fast-acting drug can very quickly cause health issues and aftereffects which can be highly unpleasant and often downright dangerous.

The short-term effects of heroin

When heroin is injected, it moves through the body very quickly, creating a rush of pleasurable sensations within a few seconds. However, along with these euphoric feelings are a number of short-term effects including:

- Drowsiness
- Lower heart rate
- Respiratory depression
- Nausea and/or vomiting
- Skin itching
- Skin flushing
- Dry mouth
- Impaired mental cognition
- Slurred speech
- Slow and shallow breathing
- Constricted pupils

As you can imagine, many of the short-term side effects of heroin use can be extremely unpleasant and distressing to the user and the people around them.

The long-term effects of heroin

Heroin is a highly addictive drug and, unfortunately, with regular use comes a number of serious long-term side effects that can cause immense damage to the brain and body.

The longer someone abuses heroin, the more likely it is they will see a decline in their cognitive abilities which will make it difficult for them to make decisions, behave appropriately, and even control their thoughts, speech, and emotions effectively.

Not only that but, long-term heroin use can place an immense amount of stress on the human body, including physical dependence, too.

Some of the most common long-term effects of heroin on the body include:

- Poor behavior regulation
- Cognitive decline
- Gum inflammation
- Tooth decay
- Poor immunity
- Chronic constipation
- Sexual dysfunction
- Respiratory issues
- Weak muscles
- Memory Loss
- Addiction

As you can see, the consequences of becoming a habitual heroin user can be dire in terms of your health and well-being, which is why if you or someone you know has a substance abuse issue around heroin, you should seek help from the Impact Outpatient Program as soon as possible.

Tolerance and addiction

When it comes to what happens to your body when you use heroin, one of the most troubling things that can happen is that your tolerance levels get higher and you become addicted to the drug.

The high that users get from heroin is so intensely euphoric that they want to pursue the experience time and time again. The more often they use heroin, the more heroin they need to use in order to get the same level of pleasure, and eventually, they will build up a significant tolerance to the drug.

When we talk about tolerance in relation to drug addiction, what we mean is how much of the drug it takes for a person to feel the desired high. The more used to heroin a person's body is, the more heroin will be required. Once a high tolerance level is reached, users will feel physically ill when they are not able to take the drug in large quantities and this is when addiction occurs.

Heroin addiction is when the body is physically dependent on the drug, causing the user to shake, feel nauseous, suffer from abdominal cramps, and otherwise feel unwell when they are not able to access the drug regularly.

When heroin users reach the point where they are dependent on the drug, they are experiencing an imbalance of the body and brain which will cause the above physical symptoms to appear regularly without access to heroin.

Heroin Withdrawal

Of course, another serious consequence of heroin use is the potential for withdrawal. If a user becomes addicted to heroin and they make the decision (or are forced to make this decision) to stop taking it, they will experience withdrawal.

Heroin withdrawal symptoms can be particularly brutal and they can last from days to weeks before the user starts to feel better. Usually, withdrawals will start 6-12 hours after the last dose of heroin is consumed.

Symptoms of heroin withdrawal include:

- Bone and muscular pain
- Cold flashes
- Restlessness
- Anxiety
- Insomnia
- Diarrhea
- Vomiting
- Restless legs
- Intense cravings

These withdrawal symptoms are likely to be more severe in people who have a higher level of dependence or who have been using the drug for a longer period of time but anyone who is addicted to heroin is likely to experience them to some degree should they decide to detox from the drug. This is why so many heroin users relapse and fail to get clean for any length of time.

That is why it is always a good idea if you or someone you love is looking to detox from heroin, that you access the help of a good drug addiction treatment center or rehabilitation facility like Impact Outpatient Program.

Impact Outpatient Program

Impact Outpatient Program is a one-of-a-kind outpatient drug and alcohol treatment center that offers a path to lasting, sustainable recovery using state-of-the-art therapeutic techniques to help addicts overcome their substance misuse issues and find their way to a healthy new start in life.

As a drug and alcohol treatment center, we offer a number of vital services and interventions that can help you or your loved one get back on track, including the following:

Intensive outpatient program

Our intensive outpatient program is designed to help those who suffer from intense drug and alcohol addictions to find a clear path to sobriety.

Many people think that only inpatient programs can be successful in helping people to overcome their addictions, however, we have had a lot of success with providing intensive support to our patients on an outpatient basis.

One of the biggest benefits of our intensive outpatient program is that you or your loved one will be able to receive all of the therapeutic help and support they need while also being able to stay at home with loving and supportive friends and family.

Many people find this much easier to comply with because they have support from loved ones but they can also maintain their regular routine to some degree. If they have a job or family commitments, this enables them to maintain those commitments more effectively.

Intensive outpatient programs typically last longer than residential programs. They can work just as well, when the patient is committed to attending all of their therapy sessions and appointments and working towards sobriety.

Outpatient Program

Our regular outpatient program is ideal for individuals who have already completed a stint in a residential rehab or who have come to the conclusion that intensive outpatient rehab but who are struggling to stay clean and/or who have suffered a relapse in recent days and months, and who are looking for some support with that.

Staying sober from heroin can be extremely challenging. Relapses can and do happen. When that is the case, our outpatient program is there to support individuals to understanding what has caused them to turn back to drugs, and then help them to find their way back to sobriety.

Our outpatient program may also be suitable for individuals who are experiencing mild substance abuse issues too.

Telemed

We also offer telehealth services which means that you can access addiction support virtually via the internet. This service is ideal for anyone who is not yet ready to engage with rehabilitation services in person, or for individuals who may not live close to a rehab center.

Our telemedicine service is just as professional and just as helpful as our in-person services as the first port of call, and you can be sure that however you contact us, we will do our best to get you on the path to recovery whatever that means for you.

If you would like to know more about admissions to the Impact Outpatient Program and how we can help with heroin addiction, do not hesitate to get in touch with us as soon as possible. What happens to your body when you use heroin can be devastating, but the sooner you seek help, the less likely you are to experience the worst. Don't suffer in silence – reach out and let us help you today.

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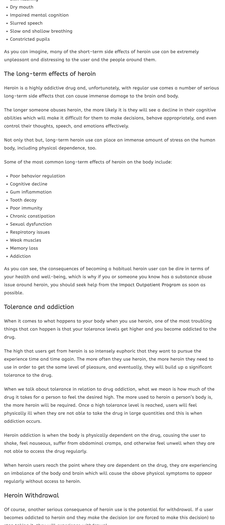

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Impact Outpatient Program offers treatment for a variety of addictions and co-occurring disorders at our Louisville area outpatient drug rehab center.

ALCOHOLISM TREATMENT

ADDICTION TREATMENT

DUAL-DIAGNOSIS TREATMENT

TELEMEDICINE TREATMENT

BEGIN YOUR JOURNEY

(502) 912-1038

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CALL NOW