

Concerned about someone using ice?



Methamphetamine use can affect people differently and may be more problematic for some people. The effects and impacts of **methamphetamine** also depend on the amount taken, the **purity** of the substance, the route of **administration**, as well as the person's physical and mental health. Below are some signs that might indicate that someone may be using; or become **dependent** on crystal methamphetamine ('ice'). If you're worried about a friend or loved one, [there is support available](#).

How can I tell if someone might be using ice?

Signs that someone may be using **crystal methamphetamine** ('ice') can include:

- Dilated (enlarged) pupils
- Increased energy
- Aggressive behaviour
- Trembling
- Complaints of stomach cramps, blurred vision, headaches or dizziness
- Exhaustion, fatigue or insomnia
- Irritability and moodiness
- Reduced appetite or other changes to eating patterns
- Anxiety symptoms such as **panic attacks**, dizziness, sweating, dry mouth, muscle aches, headaches and nausea
- Problems with money, friends, relationships or the law.

It's important to remember that ice can affect different people in different ways and that these symptoms alone do not mean someone is using ice. Find out more about the [effects of ice](#).

If you are worried about someone who may be using ice, this site provides [tips to help you start a conversation](#), information about the [types of help available](#) and [where and when to get help](#).

This information has been adapted from the Positive Choices ["How can I tell if someone is using drugs?" factsheet](#).

What are the warning signs?

The following signs indicate that a person may be dependent on **ice**:

- They mention that their ice use is out of control.
- They are increasing their amount of ice use or seem to be less affected by the same amount.
- The substance is consumed in larger amounts, or over a longer period of time, than intended.
- They worry about their ice use.
- They express a wish to stop using ice, or at least to cut down or control their use.
- They find it difficult to stop using, or to go without ice.
- Missing an opportunity to use ice makes them feel anxious or worried.
- Much of their time is taken up by ice-related activities (for example, obtaining ice, using ice, recovering from its effects).
- Other social, professional or recreational activities are reduced or completely given up in order to make more time for the drug.
- Their ice use is affecting their relationships with friends, family members and colleagues.
- They are unable to carry out routine responsibilities such as work, school or family time.

It's important to remember that people may not exhibit all the signs listed above and may still be developing **dependence**. To check whether you or someone you know might need help with ice use, [complete the 'Do I need help?' quiz](#).

This information has been adapted from the Positive Choices ["What are the warning signs of dependence on drugs?" factsheet](#).

Where to get support

If you're worried about a loved one who may be using ice, you can get support. It can be difficult to seek help but, in most cases, the sooner you reach out for support, the better. You may want to discuss your concerns with a friend that you can trust.

Your family doctor can also be a good starting point – they can confidentially discuss your concerns with you and refer you on to other services if you need additional support. For more information on support services and how to get help for yourself or a loved one, visit the [What type of help is available?](#) and [When and where to get help](#) sections of *Cracks in the Ice*.

If you need **emergency support**, please call **Lifeline (13 11 14)** which is a 24-hour crisis helpline or **dial '000'** for the police or an ambulance.

Key Sources

Australian Drug Foundation. (2016). *Amphetamines*. Retrieved from: <https://adf.org.au/drug-facts/amphetamines/>

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McKetin, R., & Black, E. (2014). *Methamphetamine: What you need to know about speed, ice, crystal, base and meth*. Sydney: National Drug and Alcohol Research Centre, University of New South Wales. Retrieved from: <https://sydney.edu.au/content/dam/corporate/documents/research/matilda-centre/methamphetamine-resources.pdf>

Positive Choices. (2016). *How can I tell if someone is using drugs?* National Drug and Alcohol Research Centre, University of New South Wales.

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