

# Heroin

**LEGAL STATUS: Illegal**  
**CLASS A**

## Worth knowing...

- Heroin is highly addictive and the body gets used to it very quickly, so the user has to take more just to feel 'normal' and to avoid severe withdrawal symptoms
- Because of a fear of using needles, many people first try heroin by smoking it on tin foil, known as 'chasing'. They may not even know it is heroin
- As with any drug which is injected, there is a risk that sharing needles can lead to blood infections, abscesses, hepatitis and HIV/AIDS
- Methadone is prescribed to many dependent users as a substitute for heroin
- Heroin is often sold in wraps of paper folded like small envelopes.

## OTHER NAMES/SLANG:

Brown, gear, H, horse, skag, smack.

## USUALLY FOUND AS:

Powder.

## HOW IT'S TAKEN:

Can be smoked, sniffed or injected.

## SIGNS OF POSSIBLE USE:

White, brownish-white or brown powder; burnt bits of tin foil; rolled banknotes; straws; solutions that you don't recognise.

## EFFECTS ON USER:

Feelings of warmth and contentment. Higher doses can cause pin-point pupils, drowsiness and even unconsciousness. 'Withdrawals' include diarrhoea, sweating, muscle cramps, and then the pupils of the eyes become dilated.

## It's a fact...

Surveys have shown that samples of heroin bought on the streets of England may contain other substances used to adulterate the drug.

This is known as 'cutting' and has the effect of making a small amount of the drug go a long way – and boosting the dealer's profits. The practice of 'cutting' is also done with other drugs, for example cocaine.



'Drugs' refers to all drugs, including medicines, volatile substances, alcohol, tobacco and illegal drugs.