Fact Sheet: Ecstasy (Methylenedioxymethamphetamine)

**Slang and Street Names**
MDMA, X, XTC, E, adam, bean, roll, x-ing, rolling, wiggling, rave, tachs.

**Forms and How People Use It**
People swallow E as a tablet or capsule, inject dissolved pills and snort crushed pills.

**What’s the High Like**
People report feeling calm, clingy, empathetic, “touchy-feely,” warm, funny in the stomach. Senses generally feel heightened, skin feels good to touch, and music sounds good. The effect takes 20-40 minutes, and lasts 3-5 hours.

**Other Effects**
Depending on the cut (what else is in the pill other than MDMA), Ecstasy may have a similar effect to amphetamines, such as increased heart rate, faster respiration, excess energy, and hyperactivity. Also nausea, loss of appetite, chills, sweating, muscle cramps, blurred vision and jaw tension. Using several pills regularly has been anecdotally linked to recurring immune problems, like herpes sores.

**Coming Down**
People may feel moody or depressed the day after use. E increases body heat and can dehydrate; some users complain of aches in the body and spine, which is most likely the effect of dehydration.

**Relationship to HIV Transmission**
E is often cut with adulterants or other drugs. Depending on the drug, people may get a different effect than expected and pursue sex unprepared. Pure MDMA produces sensual feelings, not increased libido, so HIV risk from sex may be decreased.

**Harm Reduction Practices**
Know who you get it from; most deaths are from pills that are not Ecstasy. Drink lots of water to hydrate, but not to the point of water toxicity. If dancing, maintain a healthy body temperature; find a place to breathe and cool down. DanceSafe.org sells kits to test tablets for adulterants; while some research suggests the kits don’t effectively differentiate pure MDMA from adulterated forms, the presence of testing at dance clubs and raves may deter purveyors of adulterated pills (Murray; Winstock; Stryker).

Sources