

Legal and Illegal Drugs

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Introduction

- Crime Scene Investigators should be familiar with basic pharmacology since legal and illegal drugs can be closely linked with crime.
- Drugs are often discovered in bulk form or in specimens of blood and urine at the crime scene.
- The presence of drugs are very common in traffic accidents and DUI of alcohol as well as in their illegal manufacture in home based laboratories.



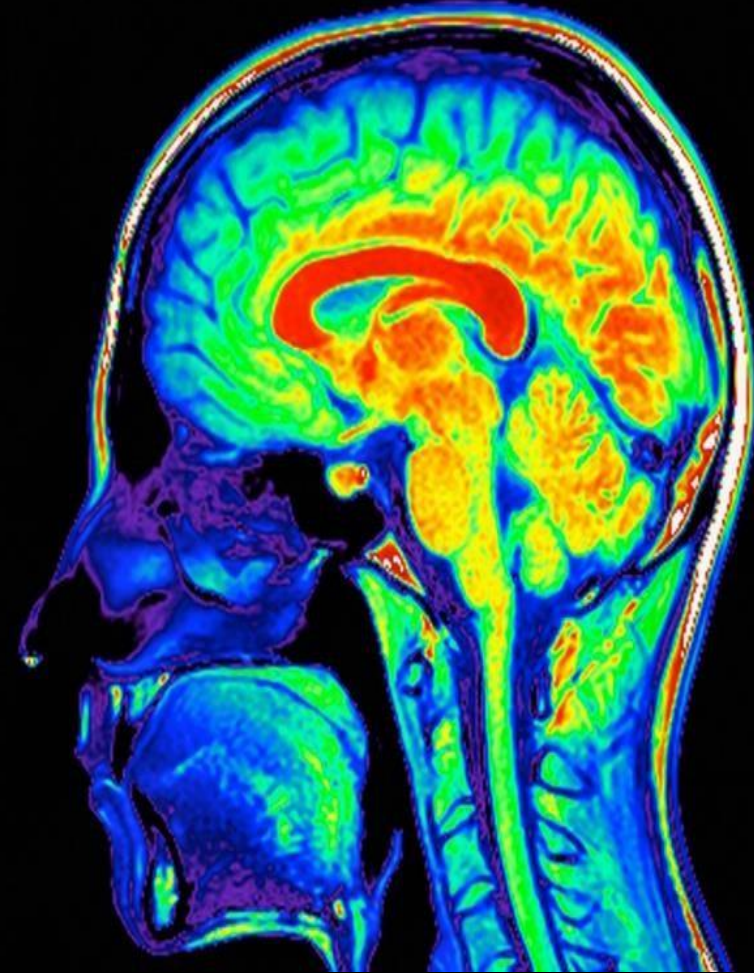
Introduction Continued

- **Drug** refers to the solid or liquid form and are sometimes called bulk drugs.
- **Toxicology** refers to the study of the type of drug, amount present, and its physiological effect on the body.
- The **Toxicological specimen**, is the sample of blood or urine taken from a suspect or victim involved at the crime scene under investigation.



Investigators Need to Know....

- How certain drugs affect an individual
- **Narcotic** refers only to those drugs which can cause an addiction.
- The term “**Controlled Drugs or Controlled Substances**”, refers to all drugs, which are covered by law and are restricted in some manner.



Implication @ The Crime Scene: Drug Addiction and Abuse

- **Addiction**- physical dependency of the user on the drug.
- Once the addiction stage is reached, the user will become physically ill if he/she is deprived of a specific dosage of the drug.
- Some drugs do not produce a physical dependence- most do.
- According to the professionals of Psychiatry, there is usually a psychological maladjustment which proceeds the addiction stage of drug abuse.
- There is also a strong physical dependence which occurs in many individuals after the initial physical rejection has occurred in the body.



Marijuana

- **Marijuana** is a drug which is not physically addictive.
- There are strong indications that the frequent user can become psychologically and emotionally dependent on marijuana.
- As the user develops a tolerance for a drug, the body tries to compensate and accept the foreign substance.
- The user is forced to take increasingly larger doses of the drug in order to obtain the original effect of the drugs
- Drug use is not restricted to any age group, race or culture, but is widespread throughout a wide cross section of our society so the danger of overdose is real with every dose.



People Take Drugs Because....

- They are one of the most documented reasons for drug abuse to shut out problems, release anxiety and sometimes helpful for troubling students.
- Drug use is not restricted to any age group, race, or culture, but is widespread throughout a wide cross section of our society.



Street Drugs

- Drugs provided by unqualified individuals in home labs are especially dangerous to the user.
- No quality control or guarantee on which drugs the large Pharmaceutical companies provide.
- On many occasions, street drugs are sold and contain lethal substances.
- There is no guarantee about dosage, so the danger of overdose is real with every dose.



Therefore Dude...Drugs...

- **Drug Abuse** applies to any use of drugs, whether or not it is legally possessed, so the user has been or is likely to be adversely affected by the drug.
- **Controlled substances** (which require a medical doctors prescription) and **over the counter drugs** (do not require a prescription) are two terms commonly used by Crime Scene Investigators.
- Even very low doses of over the counter drugs by some individuals could qualify as drug abuse.
- Many drugs which are widely recognized for their medicinal value by Doctors which are legally prescribed for patients and are also widely abused by some individuals.



Classification

- There are various classifications used to describe a general category of drugs.
- **Depressants and Stimulants** (drugs which affect the central nervous system), marijuana, hallucinogenic, designer drugs, non-prescription drugs, and inhalants are all potential crime scene evidence.



Thanks For
Your Attention!

