

Pride briefing paper

6th August 2016



We predict that the most popular substances used during Pride might be:

Ketamine Alcohol MDMA/Ecstasy Poppers

Other substances which may be used:

Laughing Gas GHB/GBL Cocaine Mephedrone

Ketamine: *K, Special K, Katy, Ket*

Ketamine is usually a white powder or sometimes in a pill form. It produces multiple effects which are dose dependent. It is described as an anaesthetic with analgesic, stimulant and psychedelic properties.



Desired effects: Low doses can be stimulating, with increased energy, euphoria, mild dissociative effects and hallucinations. Higher doses increase the dissociative effects and hallucinations with users reporting sensations of travel to other worlds, floating, increased insight and creativity.

Undesired effects: 'K hole'- physically incapable of moving & feeling detached from your body/surroundings. Unaware of injuries due to painkilling effects.

Harm reduction:

- Avoid using with other drugs as this could cause unexpected effects or overdose especially if mixed with depressants like alcohol, G, benzo's etc.
- Drink water to stay hydrated (no more than a pint an hour).
- Be aware of the dose you take, larger doses will have stronger dissociative effects which can be unpleasant in a festival/club environment.
- Be careful how much you put in a bomb- be aware it will take longer to feel effects so do not redoes for at least 1 hour.
- If snorting, change nostrils and rinse with water when possible. Do not share snorting equipment as you could spread Hep C.

Alcohol

People vary in how they metabolise or react to alcohol, so people can be affected differently by drinking similar amounts. Groups particularly vulnerable to the negative effects of alcohol are; young people, older people, low body weight, those with other health problems or taking medicines or other drugs.

Desired effects: Relaxed, sociable, confident, light headed, warm.

Undesired effects: Uncoordinated, unbalanced, nauseous, dizzy. Alcohol poisoning- confused, severely slurred speech, loss of co-ordination, vomiting, irregular or slow breathing, hypothermia (pale/blue-tinged skin), stupor (being conscious but unresponsive), unconscious.

Harm reduction:

- Drink water before and after drinking alcohol – this will hydrate you so hangover will not be so bad!
- Eat before you start drinking, the alcohol will be absorbed slower.
- Know how many units you are drinking- recommended limit is 14 units per **week** for men and women.
- Don't mix your drinks and try to drink smaller measures: bottles of beer rather than pints, singles instead of doubles, smaller glasses of wine.
- Alternate alcohol with a soft drink or a weaker drink.
- Keep your drink with you at all times, so no-one can spike it.

MDMA/Ecstasy: Mandy, pills, E, molly

Available in powder or pill forms. Increasing reports in the media over the last few months of people being hospitalised from using MDMA or pills. Reported that pills contain up to 3 times the amount of MDMA recommended for use.



Desired effects: Energised, euphoric, connected to others, empathic, aroused.

Undesired effects: Nauseous, overheated, panic, paranoia, increased heart rate & blood pressure.

Harm reduction:

- Strengths can vary so take ¼ pill or 1/10th of a gram of powder and then wait for at least 1 hour.
- Drink water but no more than 1 pint an hour. Avoid caffeinated drinks.
- Take regular breaks from dancing or hot environments as you could overheat, get some fresh air and sit down regularly.
- Chew on some chewing gum to reduce harm from gurning/clenching your jaw.
- Do not share snorting equipment, swap nostrils & wash them out when you can.

Poppers: Amyl Nitrate, Liquid Gold, Rush

Usually found in the form of a liquid chemical sold in a small bottle.

They dilate the blood vessels and allow more blood to get to the heart.

Small glass bottles of Poppers could easily be confused with bottles of GBL. Poppers are sniffed from the bottle whereas GBL is swallowed. Swallowing poppers could lead to serious illness or even death.



Desired effects: Short, sharp head-rush like 'high', enhanced sexual experiences

Undesired effects: Chemicals burns around nose/mouth, irritated nose/throat, nauseous, faint, disorientated

Harm reduction:

- They can burn your skin on contact & they're highly flammable so avoid skin contact.

- Poppers are potentially dangerous for anyone with heart problems, anaemia or glaucoma (an eye disease) due to sudden drop in blood pressure & reduced oxygen supply.
- You may lose consciousness so don't use alone. Using poppers with alcohol can increase this risk.
- Poppers are linked with risky sexual behaviour so bring a condom!
- Fatal 'sudden sniffing death syndrome' has been reported due to development of an abnormal heart rhythm when taking poppers.
- There are a number of reports in recent years of cases of temporary and permanent loss of vision in users of poppers. If you are experiencing problems with your eyesight after having used poppers, we would strongly advise you get medical advice.

Laughing Gas: *Balloons, NOS, Nitrous, Nitrous Oxide*

Colourless, non-flammable gas that is slightly sweet smelling & tasting.

Recreational users often get it from whipped-cream chargers, sometimes called 'whippets', which are single-use, finger-length steel cartridges containing 8g of highly pressurised nitrous oxide. In order to produce its dissociative effects, nitrous oxide is inhaled, usually by mouth with the use of a balloon.



Desired effects: Euphoria, giggling, laughing, mild hallucinogenic effects e.g. distorted sound.

Undesired effects: Nausea, headaches, dizziness, unpleasant dissociation, loss of balance.

Harm reduction:

- Do not inhale straight from the canister, it may have chemical residue & may be pressurised at a very low temperature which could cause frostbite.
- You may be more prone to accidents due to dizziness/lack of balance so avoid standing near roads, cliffs etc.
- Do not use in enclosed spaces or cover your mouth/nose as you may reduce your oxygen supply to dangerous levels.

GHB/GBL: *G, Gina, Liquid Ecstasy, Liquid X, Juice, Geebs*

GHB is a central nervous system (CNS) depressant, with sedative & anaesthetic qualities. GBL is a colourless, slightly oily liquid that is clear to semi opaque. It has a distinctive taste that some users have described as being distinctly chemical, like a solvent, nail varnish or paint stripper.

Desired effects: Euphoria, relaxation, sexual arousal, reduced inhibitions.

Undesired effects: Sedation, unconsciousness, dizzy, confused, seizures.

Harm reduction:



- G can be fatal. It is very easy to overdose on it, both because the strength can vary from bottle to bottle & because the doses involved are measured in such small quantities (0.3 – 2mls). Be prepared and measure accurately with a low dose.
- Take G in a drink such as fruit juice or milk to reduce irritation to your stomach.
- Mixing with depressant drugs such as ketamine or alcohol, this is particularly dangerous as this can trigger instant collapse or an overdose reaction.
- GHB & GBL have been found to reduce the efficiency of some HIV medication and have also been implicated in sexual assaults or 'date rapes'.
- GBL is physically addictive & stopping it without medical supervision can be fatal; sudden withdrawal poses dangerous health risks & can require an in-patient detox. If you're withdrawing go to A&E.

Cocaine: *Coke, Charlie, white, ching*

Powder cocaine is one of the most commonly used drugs in the UK. It is a stimulant and is usually snorted although it can be prepared for injecting. It is a white powder and the effects are fairly short which may lead to people using a lot in one session.



Desired effects: Energised, confident, chatty, high.

Undesired effects: High temperature, palpitations, strong desire to re-dose, aggressive, chest pains.

Harm reduction:

- Avoid using with alcohol, when used together they combine to make a more toxic chemical which increases the likelihood of unpleasant effects.
- Using cocaine is very risky if you have high blood pressure or a heart condition, taking too much can lead to fits or even heart attack.
- Avoid injecting & if you do, always use clean equipment. Do not share snorting equipment!
- Cocaine can reduce your appetite, make sure you eat something especially if you're being very active.
- Take time out to cool down and relax.

Mephedrone: *Meph, Drone, MCAT, Meow Meow*

Usually a white/off-white powder, similar stimulant & entactogenic ('loved up') effects to ecstasy. Mephedrone can be snorted, swallowed, inserted 'up the bum' or injected, it has a strong, unpleasant smell, not unlike cat urine.



Desired effects: Energised, euphoric, sociable, chatty,

Undesired effects: Increased heart rate & palpitations, sweating/hot flushes, dry mouth, numbed fingers or toes, blurred vision, chest pain, paranoia.

Harm reduction:

- Drink plenty of water and take time out to reduce temperature.
- Chew on some chewing gum to reduce jaw clenching/grinding teeth.
- Avoid using in binges, only have a reasonable amount on you to avoid using all of your batch in one go.
- Avoid injecting, if you do- use clean works! Swap nostrils and clean them when you can.
- Mephedrone may be cut with other chemicals and can vary in strength so only use a small amount and wait for at least 1 hour.

Substances to be aware of:

Synthetic Cannabinoids: *Spice, Mamba, Clockwork Orange, Train Wreck, Exodus Damnation*

Dried plant material which has been sprayed with man-made chemicals often referred to as Synthetic Cannabinoids, producing similar effects to THC (tetrahydrocannabinol), the active ingredient in Cannabis. They can also be smoked as C-Cigs, the drug is suspended in E-Cig liquid.



Desired effects: Relaxation, euphoria, increased confidence, enhanced senses, escapism.

Undesired effects: Increased heart rate, hypertension, nausea/vomiting, seizures, headaches, anxiety, agitation, skin rash, disorientation.

Harm reduction:

- As Spice is much stronger than cannabis use a lot less of it- a matchstick head amount per joint is recommended.
- Smoke sitting down and/or away of roads/cliffs as lots of people have reported collapsing and feeling off balance after smoking.
- Avoid using Spice if you have any mental health concerns as it often makes people paranoid, agitated and aggressive.

Ecstasy/PMA pills associated with hospitalisations or death...



It has been observed that MDMA/Ecstasy powder & pills are high in strength at the moment, some up to 3 times the recommended amount. This means people are more at risk of the negative side effects of use such as; dehydration, overheating, confusion etc. If people choose to use it is recommended to start with very low doses and WAIT for at least 45 minutes before taking anymore.

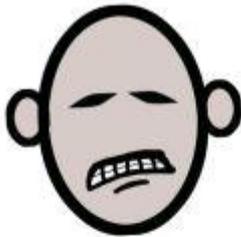
What to do if you're concerned...



If they are overheating: cool them down by removing outer clothing; fan them; use a wet cloth on their skin*; take them outside or somewhere cool. If they are conscious allow them to sip water or a non alcoholic drink.

Call an ambulance.

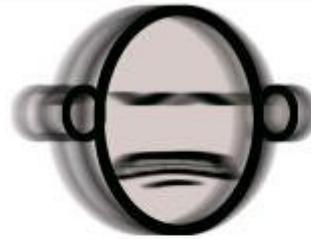
**Do not use very cold water, this can repel the superficial blood vessels deeper into the body and prevent heat loss. Even lukewarm water is fine as it mimics the temperature of sweat, the body's natural way to reduce temperature.*



If they have chest pains: sit them down in a calm environment and reassure them. **Call an ambulance.**



If they can't be woken: (by shaking their shoulders and calling their name), or you notice a blueness of the skin, including lips or fingernails (or greyish for darker complexions) or they have trouble breathing, **call an ambulance.**



If they are having a 'fit': make sure the area is safe and there is nothing they could hurt themselves on. **Call an ambulance.** Be sure to inform the paramedics if the fit stops and starts, if it doesn't stop within a couple of minutes or if the person turns blue.



Vomiting/feeling unwell: vomiting is usually nature's way of telling you've had too much. If somebody is unwell, don't give them anything to eat and only let them drink water (never force them to drink anything). If after vomiting they want to sleep, let them but keep your eye on them. Make sure they are lying on their side (see the **recovery position** on next page.)



Bad trip/freak out/paranoia: if somebody is having a frightening or disturbing drug experience or have become very paranoid, take them somewhere that is quiet where **they** feel safe (ideally a low stimulus environment and not a dance floor in a nightclub). Try to calm and reassure them ("it will pass - the drugs will wear off"). This can take hours, so be prepared to be patient. If they become panicky and you notice them breathing very fast, get them to control their breathing by slowing it down or breathing into a paper bag. If any of these disturbing experiences carry on after the drug has worn off, they need to speak to a doctor or drug service.

Services

Pavilions Drug & Alcohol Service will be at Pride, in the park located in the community stalls, close to the Trans tent 12-5pm. We will be handing out free promotional gifts as well as harm reduction and safety advice for the day. Richmond House, Richmond Road, Brighton, BN2 3RL. 0800 014 9819



Safe Space helps those who are distressed, either through being intoxicated, injured, have lost their friends or are unable to get home and need support. St Pauls Church, West Street. Open Friday & Saturday 11pm – 3:30am.



ru-OK? work alongside under 18s whose lives are affected by substance misuse. 1 Regency Road, Brighton, BN1 2RU. 01273 293966



ru-OK? & the Youth Service provide the 'Pride Buddies' team which offers support and advice to young people around the Festival, who may have over indulged or need practical support.

St John Ambulance will be onsite providing First Aid support at Pride Festival in 2 locations: on the north side of the park near to the main stage and on the south side near to the Wild Fruit dance tent. They will also be based at Marine Parade opposite Madeira Place, in Dorset Gardens Methodist Church and at the Pride Pleasure Gardens (all on Saturday night, only Marine Parade on Sunday).

