

Methamphetamine



Questions and Answers:

Q: What is methamphetamine?

A: Methamphetamine, also known as meth, chalk, crank, crystal meth and ice, is a synthetic drug manufactured from chemical ingredients. It belongs to a group of drugs called stimulants.

Methamphetamine is only produced illegally. It can come in the form of a pill/tablet, powder or crystal. Methamphetamine can be ingested, inhaled, smoked and injected.

Short and long-term effects are available on Health Canada.

For more detailed information on the long and short term effects of methamphetamine use, please visit the Health Canada website resource on methamphetamine at <https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/substance-use/controlled-illegal-drugs/methamphetamine.html>

Q: What is a clandestine lab (aka “clan lab”)?

A: A clandestine lab is an illicit operation consisting of a combination of sufficient apparatus and precursor chemicals that have been and/or could be used in the production of a controlled substance or precursor chemicals.

There are two types of clandestine lab 1) synthetic (i.e. methamphetamine, ketamine) and 2) organic – psilocybin (i.e. magic mushrooms)

Q: What are the indicators of a methamphetamine/synthetic drug lab?

A: Synthetic drug labs can be found anywhere.

Indicators may include:

- Suspicious activity, secretive behavior and individuals may avoid neighbour interactions.
- Occupants attend for short periods and at odd hours.
- Chemical odours.
- Garbage contains numerous chemical containers, glassware, bags full of soil or garbage that are never put out.

- The location has excessive security.
- Evidence of chemical dumping grounds on or near premises (burn pits or dead spots on the lawn).
- Windows covered.
- Odd items being brought inside the location – equipment, glassware, chemical drums, etc.

Q: What are the dangers of a synthetic drug lab?

A: The dangers of a synthetic drug lab include:

- fire
- explosion
- harmful fumes and chemical exposure
- environmental damage and waste

Q: What are the environmental dangers of a synthetic drug lab?

A: The production of one kilogram of methamphetamine produces about six kilograms of toxic waste. This waste is usually disposed of through illegal dumping resulting in environmental contamination and health hazards for the public.

There have been several incidents of chemical waste and precursor chemicals being found abandoned along roadside ditches. At some locations, the area is littered with empty containers of iodine, acetone, isopropyl alcohol, caustic soda and ephedrine. There are significant public safety impacts on humans and wildlife-related to these dumpsites due to the nature of the debris left behind.

Q: What is law enforcement doing to disrupt methamphetamine importation, production and trafficking in Canada?

A: Strategically, Canadian law enforcement has taken the position of focusing on organized crime groups, rather than specific commodities. Organized crime groups have the propensity to deal with a variety of commodities. These commodities range from human trafficking and firearms to a variety of drug types, such as meth.

Q: What is the connection between organized crime and methamphetamine?

A: Methamphetamine has emerged as one of the most significant commodities within organized crime, entrenched from production to importation and distribution.

Q: Where do I get help with problematic substance use?

A: Canadian law enforcement strongly advocates for increased efforts centred on prevention, education and access to treatment.

There are resources available for those seeking help on the Health Canada website:

canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/substance-use/controlled-illegal-drugs/methamphetamine.html

[Treatment at CAMH: https://www.camh.ca/en/health-info/mental-illness-and-addiction-index/methamphetamines](https://www.camh.ca/en/health-info/mental-illness-and-addiction-index/methamphetamines)

Q: How do I report a suspected methamphetamine lab?

A: If you see indicators of a methamphetamine lab:

- Call local police at 1-888-310-1122 immediately. If you wish to remain anonymous, call Crime Stoppers at 1-800-222-8477 (TIPS).
- Remain at a safe distance.
- Refrain from approaching or confronting suspects.

Q: What about the industries that are creating or selling materials that may assist with creating methamphetamine, are you educating them as well?

A: As part of the National Public Awareness Campaign on Methamphetamine & Synthetic Drugs, educational materials have been created and will be provided to industry leaders who sell materials, including precursor chemicals and tools required for methamphetamine production, so they are better informed to recognize suspicious transactions. Employees within these industries will be able to identify potentially suspicious transactions that could indicate the customer has purchased for the purpose of methamphetamine or synthetic drug production. Reporting procedures are in place by Health Canada for these industries to report suspicious transactions within 72 hours. In addition, Crime Stoppers can be contacted anonymously to report any suspicious transaction.

Q: It sounds like methamphetamine has a large impact on the well-being and health of people who use it, why are you not educating people on that?

A: Methamphetamine can have devastating impacts within our communities. Law enforcement across Canada are continuously collaborating with local health agencies to educate the public on the dangers associated with methamphetamine use.

Q: Due to the environmental concerns of methamphetamine, will I be made aware if there is a methamphetamine lab in my community?

A: When a methamphetamine or synthetic drug production lab is identified, law enforcement will investigate and gather the evidence required to dismantle the identified lab. When enforcement action occurs, law enforcement agencies will make their communities aware by way of a media release. It is important to contact Crime Stoppers or local law enforcement if you believe there is a methamphetamine or synthetic drug production site within your community.

Indicators may include:

- Suspicious activity, secretive behaviour and individuals may avoid neighbour interactions.
- Occupants attend for short periods and at odd hours.
- Chemical odours.
- Garbage contains numerous chemical containers, glassware, bags full of soil or garbage that are never put out.
- The location has excessive security.
- Evidence of chemical dumping grounds on or near premises (burn pits or dead spots on the lawn).
- Windows covered.
- Odd items being brought inside the location – equipment, glassware, chemical drums, etc.

If you suspect a methamphetamine or synthetic drug production site within your community, do not touch or move anything on or surrounding the location and stay within a safe distance. Contact your local police or Crime Stoppers to remain anonymous.