



# Illicit Drugs / Substance Abuse, Its Impact on Kidneys and Importance of Providing Proper Intervention to Reduce Kidney Damages

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## Editorial

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## Editorial

Illegal drug abuse continues to be a significant global challenge. Despite efforts to reduce the supply and demand of illegal drugs, drug trafficking and abuse remain prevalent in many parts of the world. According to the World Drug Report 2022, an estimated 284 million people worldwide aged 15 – 64 had used a drug in 2020 and majority of them are men. Further, it corresponds to approximately 1 in every 18 people in that age group. It represents 26% increase when compared to the data 2010 [1].

Drug problem affects in different ways and costs the individual, family, neighbors, friends, workforce and the community in significant and measurable ways including loss of productivity, unemployment, impairment in mental and physical health, reduce quality of life, drug-related deaths, increase of violence and crimes, abuse and negligence of children, treatment costs and finally become a huge burden to the economy of the country [1].

The most commonly used illicit drugs in the world are cannabis, opioids and cocaine [1]. Opioids, including prescription painkillers and mainly heroin, are highly addictive and can lead to various health consequences such as respiratory depression and overdose deaths. Cannabis, also known as marijuana, is the most widely used illicit drug globally and is often consumed for its psychoactive effects. While cannabis is now legal for recreational or medicinal use in some countries and it remains illegal in many others. Cocaine, a powerful stimulant, known for its addictive properties and can cause a range of negative

health consequences, including cardiovascular problems and addiction [2]. Other commonly used illicit drugs include amphetamines, methamphetamines, and synthetic drugs like fentanyl. The global challenge of illegal drug abuse underscores the importance of effective prevention and treatment programs, as well as international cooperation in combating drug trafficking and promoting public health.

Illicit drug abuse is a global problem that has a wide range of negative impacts on health, including damage to the kidneys and urinary system. Many illicit drugs, including heroin, cocaine and methamphetamine, can cause severe and sometimes irreversible harm to these vital organs [3].

The kidneys play a critical role in filtering waste and excess fluids from the body. Drug abuse can damage the blood vessels in the kidneys, leading to a decrease in blood flow and oxygen supply. Some times this may lead to chronic kidney disease, a condition in which the kidneys slowly lose their ability to function properly. Chronic kidney disease can eventually progress to end-stage renal disease, a serious and life-threatening condition that requires dialysis or a kidney transplant [4].

In addition to the damage on kidneys, drug abuse can also affect to the urinary system. Drugs like cocaine and methamphetamine can cause bladder inflammation, which leads to pain and discomfort during urination. Chronic use of these drugs can also lead to the development of kidney stones, which can cause severe pain and may require surgical

intervention. Injecting drugs also increases the risk of urinary tract infections, which can lead to kidney damage if left untreated. Injection drug use can also increase the risk of kidney infections, a serious condition that can lead to sepsis and other life-threatening complications.

Overall, the harmful impact of illicit drug abuse on the kidneys and urinary system highlights the importance of early intervention and treatment for those struggling with addiction. Preventative measures, such as education and awareness campaigns, can also play a critical role in reducing the incidence of drug abuse and the associated health risks. Ultimately, addressing the global problem of illicit drug abuse requires a multifaceted approach that involves prevention, treatment, community correction, social reintegration and ongoing support for those affected by addiction.

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