

Assessment of Acute Intoxication

Class of Drug	Intoxication	Overdose
Opioids (e.g. methadone, heroin, morphine)	Constriction of pupils Itching/scratching Sedation/somnolence Lowered blood pressure Slowed pulse Hypoventilation	Loss of consciousness Respiratory depression Pinpoint pupils Hypotension Bradycardia Pulmonary oedema
Alcohol	Relaxation Disinhibition Impaired coordination Impaired judgement Poor concentration Slurred speech Unsteady gait Vomiting	Nausea and vomiting Disorientation/confusion Respiratory depression Loss of consciousness Loss of bladder control
Benzodiazepines (e.g. diazepam, oxazepam, flunitrazepam)	Disinhibition Sedation Drooling Impaired coordination Slurred Speech Lowered blood pressure Unsteady gait	Stupor/coma Ataxia Confusion/disorientation Respiratory depression
Stimulants (e.g. amphetamines, cocaine)	Hyperactivity Restlessness Agitation Anxiety/nervousness Dilation of pupils Elevated blood pressure Increased pulse Raised temperature Sweating Tremor	Headache Panic attacks Acute paranoid psychosis Seizures Cardiac arrhythmias Myocardial ischaemia Hypertensive crisis Cerebrovascular accidents Hyperpyrexia Dehydration
Cannabis	Relaxation Poor concentration Impaired psychomotor performance Unsteady gait Red conjunctivitis	Paranoid psychosis Confusion Agitation Anxiety/panic attacks Hallucinations

Signs and symptoms to look for/enquire about

Intoxication		Toxicity	
Slurred speech Unsteady gait Sedation Pupil constriction/dilation Conjunctival injection	Alcoholic foetor Disinhibition Drooling Restlessness Itching/scratching	Drowsiness Shallow breathing Poor circulation Increased temperature Slow or rapid pulse	Nausea and vomiting Headache Confusion Tremor Agitation Sweating

From NSW Methadone Maintenance Treatment Clinical Practice Guidelines. Used with permission.