DO YOU KNOW...

...for how long some illegal drugs can affect your body, or for how long a drug can be detected in a urine test?
...how an illegal drug may interact with you in the diving environment?
...how it can affect you physically or psychologically?
...that the strength of some strains of cannabis has increased more than tenfold since the 1980s? Regular cannabis use is associated with increased risk of developing psychotic illnesses later in life, including schizophrenia. A family background of mental illness may increase this risk. It is also possible that frequent use of cannabis can affect the fertility of men and women.
...that cocaine seized by police in 2009 was on average only 33% pure? If you don't know how pure your cocaine is, you won't know how strong it is, or what other substances you may be taking.
...that illegal drug-users are more likely to experience non-fatal accidents than non-users?
...that about 18% of people killed in road accidents have traces of illegal drugs in their blood?

The effects of some drugs last for days or weeks. National Statistics estimates that in the past year 8.8% of adults aged 16-59 (almost 3 million people) used illegal drugs, and that 3% (around 1 million) used a Class A drug.

Divers are told during training not to use illegal drugs, but are given few facts and figures or details such as effects on reaction times, class of drug, whether stimulants or hallucinogens – and the risks.

Scuba-diving requires information-processing, recall, reasoning, decision-making, attention and ability to take control of a situation in a number of scenarios – on shore, in a boat, at the water's surface or under water.

These situations may be affected by the use of illegal drugs within certain time-frames. Turn the page and learn about the types of illegal drug, class, onset and duration of effects, detection in urine, and think about the side-effects – both above and below the water!
### TYPE, CLASS, DURATION, DETECTION TIMES AND SIDE-EFFECTS

#### STIMULANTS

**AMPETAMINE**

UK Class A / USA Schedule 2.

- Rapid effect with intravenous and smoking use, slower orally, overall effect 4-8 hours, residual up to 12 hours.
- Detection time in urine: 1-4 days.
- CNS stimulation, increased heart rate, elevated BP, delusions, light sensitivity, anxiety, insomnia, irrational behaviour, headache, hallucinations, can cause convulsions.
- May affect judgment and problem-solving ability, and increase hypothermia susceptibility under water.

**HALLUCINOGENS**

**CANNABIS/MARIJUANA**

UK Class B / USA Schedule 1.

- Within 30 minutes, high may last up to 2 hours, behavioural and physiological effects return to baseline within 3-5 hours, residual effects in specific behaviours up to 24 hours.
- Detection time in urine: 1-3 days but may be 20 days or longer.
- Increased cardiac output, vaso-dilatation, dry mouth, decreased co-ordination, impaired learning/memory, euphoria, relaxed inhibitions, subjective slowing of time, apathy, alterations in thought formation and expression, impaired motor performance.
- May impair judgment and ability to respond appropriately while diving.

**AMPHETA MINES**

- **ECSTASY (MDMA)**
  - UK Class A / USA Schedule 1.
  - Within 20-30 minutes, desired effect 1 hour, general effect 2-3 days.
  - Detection time in urine: Up to 4 days.
  - CNS stimulation, relaxation, euphoria, changes in perception, impaired performance, panic attacks, visual disturbance, anxiety, dry mouth, sweating, dehydration, can cause convulsions.

- **MAGIC MUSHROOMS (Psilocybe & Amanita Muscaria)**
  - UK Class A / USA Schedule 1.
  - Within 30 minutes to 2 hours, high at about 4-10 hours, after-effects a further 2-6 hours.

### THE RISKS AND THE LAW

**CANNABIS**

Possession is illegal, whatever the use (including pain relief). The penalty is up to 5 years in jail.

Cannabis may cause feelings of anxiety, suspicion, panic and paranoia.

**COCAINE**

Possession can land you in jail for up to 7 years.

Again, possession is illegal and can land you in jail for up to 7 years and/or with an unlimited fine!

**AMPHETA MINES**

Speed puts a strain on your heart, so if you have high blood pressure or a heart condition, it’s not a good idea – users have died from overdoses.

It will put you in jail too, for up to 5 years, and/or result in an unlimited fine.

**MAGIC MUSHROOMS**

You can have flash-backs, and if you already have mental-health problems magic mushrooms can make them worse.

In 2012 the Government is creating new drug-driving legislation, which will make it much easier for the police to take action against drug-drivers.

These new proposals will make it an offence to drive a motor vehicle if you have certain drugs in excess of specified limits detected in your body.

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**THE RISK OF DRIVING OVER SPECIFIED LIMITS**

- Driving under the influence of drugs may impair your ability to drive safely and make it harder to respond to unexpected events.
- Speed or the use of specific drugs may cause impaired reaction times, impaired judgment, and problems with balance and coordination.
- These impairments can be dangerous to yourself and others on the road.

**DEPRESSIVES, SEDATIVES & HYPNOTICS**

**BARBITURATES**

UK Class B / USA Schedule 3.

- Long-acting effect within 1-2 hours, total effect 12 hours or longer.
- Detection time in urine: Short-acting 1 day, long-acting 2-3 weeks.
- CNS depression, cardiovascular system depression, decreased mental acuity, euphoria, depressed respiratory function, anxiety suppression.
- May impair judgment and ability to respond appropriately while diving.

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**Glass….. Speed….. Dust….. Snow….. Disco Biscuit….. Essence…..**

**….. Blunt….. Gangster….. Animal….. White Lightning….. Silk….. Chippers…..**
DON’T BE A STATISTIC...

According to a research study conducted in 2007/8 and published in 2011 by the Diving Diseases Research Centre (DDRC):

🌟 22% of the 531 divers who took part in the project said that they had used one or more illicit drug since learning to dive, compared with more than 35% of the UK population.

🌟 More than 3% of the divers admitted to the use of one or more drug in the past 12 months, and 3% in the past month.

🌟 9% had used a class A drug since learning to dive.

🌟 21% of the divers who used illegal drugs also admitted to using a class A or B drug between 5 minutes and 24 hours before a dive.

🌟 Cannabis, cocaine, and ecstasy were all reported between 5 minutes and 6 hours before a dive.

🌟 Cannabis was the most popular drug of choice – in line with the national population – with cocaine and ecstasy a close second and third!

🌟 LSD and magic mushrooms were also used by divers.

...DON’T DO DRUGS & DIVE

Find out more about DDRC at www.ddrc.org;
Facebook & Twitter – DDRCPlymouth
Find out more about Dive Master Insurance at www.divemasterinsurance.com
Find out more about the effects of illegal drugs at www.talktofrank.com