

Physical Signs of Heroin Addiction

1. Dry Mouth

Heroin, like other opioids, can cause dry mouth (xerostomia) by suppressing saliva production. It binds to opioid receptors in the brain, disrupting signals to the salivary glands. Dry mouth is a very common side effect of opioid use.



2. Low Energy

Lethargy from heroin use is a result of its sedative and depressant effects on the CNS, as well as its impact on brain chemistry, oxygen levels, sleep, and nutrition. While the initial high may provide a sense of euphoria and energy, the aftermath and long-term effects often lead to a cycle of fatigue, physical exhaustion, and mental sluggishness.



3. Inability to Sleep

Heroin use can cause significant insomnia through a combination of its impact on neurotransmitters, disruption of natural sleep patterns, and withdrawal symptoms. While heroin may initially induce drowsiness, its long-term effects lead to disrupted sleep cycles, poor sleep quality, and difficulty maintaining restful sleep.



4. Chronic Itching

Itching from heroin use is primarily due to histamine release, which is a direct result of the drug's effects on the body. While it may seem like a minor side effect, chronic itching can be bothersome and is a sign of the broader impact heroin is having on the body.



5. Weight Loss and Other Changes in Appearance

Heroin causes weight loss primarily by suppressing appetite and increasing metabolism. Users often skip meals, leading to unhealthy weight loss over time. As dependence grows, overall health declines, resulting in symptoms like pale skin, sunken eyes, and a frail, haggard appearance.



6. Difficulty Focusing

Heroin affects focus and alertness. While the drug may provide temporary euphoria, its long-term effects dull mental sharpness, making it difficult for users to concentrate, make decisions, and stay engaged with their surroundings.



7. Skin Sores and Scabs

Heroin causes sores and scabs for several reasons, including poor immune function, injection site damage, skin picking, dehydration, and inadequate nutrition. The drug's direct effects on the body, such as compromised circulation and the introduction of bacteria, as well as the physical toll of addiction, contribute to skin issues that can lead to painful lesions and scabs.

