

# DRUG DRIVING: WHAT WOULD YOU PAY?

If you are stopped by the police for drug driving, the penalties are every bit as severe as those for drink driving. Potential consequences are:

- fines of up to £5,000
- loss of your licence
- being barred from hiring a car
- refusal of visa and entry to certain countries (eg the USA)
- being barred from certain jobs and professions
- up to 6 months in prison.

If you drive on drugs the chances of having or causing accidents are dramatically increased. The consequences could be devastating.

If you are caught, the police can test and will prosecute. The penalties for drug driving are severe.

**Don't pay the ultimate price.  
Don't take drugs and drive.**

# WHAT WOULD YOU PAY?



# HOW DO DRUGS AFFECT YOUR DRIVING?



Most people know about the dangers of drink driving, but are less aware of the risks of driving whilst on other drugs. The number of drivers killed in road accidents with some kind of drug in their bloodstream has increased substantially in the last decade.

Drugs affect individuals in different ways. Exactly what happens depends on the type of drug, the amount taken and its purity. A person's mood, body size and personality also make a difference.

What is certain is that drug taking makes it more difficult to control a vehicle. Perception of speeds and distances are altered, whilst concentration and reaction times can be seriously reduced. As a result the chances of having an accident are significantly increased.

## CANNABIS

Also known as marijuana, grass, weed, hash or ganja - cannabis is the most widely used illegal drug in the UK. Regarded by some as a fairly harmless relaxant, cannabis use can impair your ability to drive, through:

- poor concentration

- disorientation and paranoia
- reduced co-ordination and balance
- short-term memory loss and mental confusion.



## STIMULANTS INCLUDING ECSTASY, COCAINE & AMPHETAMINES

Stimulants give drivers a false sense of confidence and increase risk-taking behaviour. They are sometimes used to counteract tiredness, but lack of sleep or rest will lead to poor concentration and increase the risk of an accident. How?

- cocaine exaggerates confidence which can result in rash decision making
- ecstasy distorts visual perceptions
- distances become harder to assess
- reduced co-ordination of appropriate reactions
- reduced awareness of road dangers.

## HALLUCINOGENS SUCH AS LSD & MAGIC MUSHROOMS

These drugs cause hallucinations and distortion of the senses. Driving is highly dangerous, because:

- visual perceptions are changed
- time and distance are distorted
- ability to react to changing situations on the road is severely limited
- hallucinations can cause the driver to react dangerously.



## ALCOHOL, BARBITUATES, TRANQUILLISERS & GHB

This type of drug affects the body's central nervous system by slowing down activity in the brain. If you drive:

- reaction times are reduced
- perceptions are distorted
- concentration is poor.

With prescribed medications such as Diazepam it is important that you always read instructions carefully, or consult a doctor to find out how the medication may impact on your driving ability.

## OPIATES SUCH AS HEROIN, OPIUM, CODEINE & METHADONE

Opiates slow down the whole body, including breathing and heart rate. How can this affect your driving?

- reaction times are slowed
- perception of speed and distance is distorted
- concentration is diminished
- they can induce unconsciousness.



## MIXING DRUGS

Using two or more drugs at the same time, such as alcohol and an illegal substance, can be extremely dangerous. The combined cocktail effect is often more powerful than drugs taken on their own and can have unpredictable results.

GHB for example slows down breathing and heart rate and can react powerfully with other drugs. It affects co-ordination and can cause you to fall unconscious.

To avoid problems with prescription drugs you should always carefully follow medical advice or the guidelines on the packaging.