

A Weekly FAX from the Center for Substance Abuse Research

University of Maryland, College Park

Cocaine, Heroin, Methamphetamine, and Marijuana Are Greatest Drug Threats to U.S.

Cocaine is the primary drug threat to the United States, followed by heroin, methamphetamine, and marijuana, according to the 2002 *National Drug Threat Assessment* issued by the National Drug Intelligence Center. MDMA (ecstasy) trafficking and use has also increased greatly over the past year. Other club drugs (GHB, ketamine, and Rohypnol), hallucinogens, and prescription drugs are also a growing concern. A copy of the full report is available online at <http://www.usdoj.gov/ndic/>

Current Availability, Demand, Production, and Distribution of Selected Drugs, 2002

Drug	Availability	Demand	Production	Distribution
Cocaine	All areas of the country.	High and relatively stable since the mid-90s. Slight downward trends recently.	South America, primarily Colombia.	Gangs control most retail distribution across the country. Violence is common.
Heroin	All major metropolitan areas; increasingly available in many rural and suburban areas.	Has increased steadily since early 90s; use now appears to be stabilizing at high levels.	South America (primarily Colombia) and Mexico.	Criminal groups, gangs.
Methamphetamine	Throughout the western U.S. and increasingly available in eastern areas.	Stable or increasing slightly.	United States and Mexico	Criminal groups, gangs (including motorcycle), and local independents
Marijuana	Most widely available illicit drug	Stable or decreased slightly. Exceeds that of any other illicit drug.	United States and Mexico	Criminal groups (wholesale), gangs (including motorcycle), and independents.
MDMA (ecstasy)	In every state; availability is increasing.	Increased sharply since mid-90s and is growing	Primarily Netherlands or Belgium; labs emerging in Canada and Mexico	Independents and gangs.

NOTE: Gangs refer to groups or associations of three or more persons with a common identifying sign, symbol, or name, the members of which individually or collectively engage in criminal activity that creates an atmosphere of fear and intimidation.

SOURCE: Adapted by CESAR from National Drug Intelligence Center, "National Drug Threat Assessment 2002," 2001.

"Prescription Drug Abuse—A New Epidemic" to Be Held at Rockville Barnes & Noble Store

The Honorable Asa Hutchinson (Administrator of the Drug Enforcement Administration), Cindy Mogil (author of the book "Swallowing a Bitter Pill"), other specialists, and guest politicians will discuss this critical health problem at the Rockville Barnes & Noble Store on Monday, March 18th at 7:30 pm.