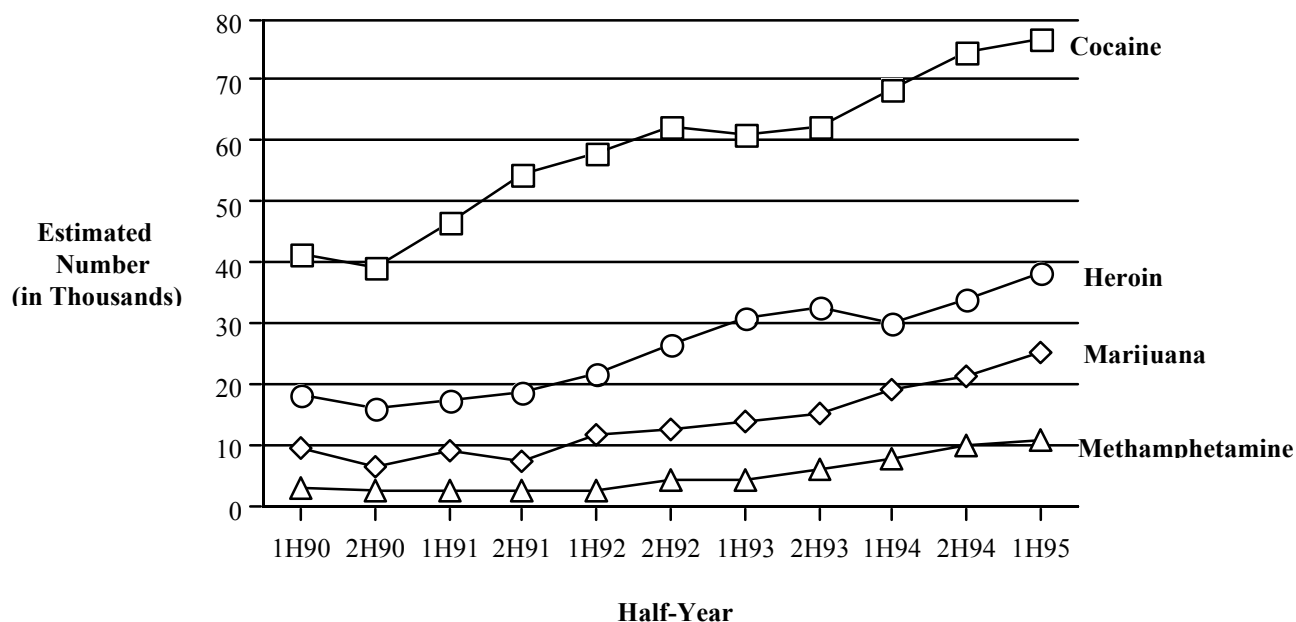


## ***National DAWN Data Show Significant Increases in Drug-Related Emergency Department Episodes***

Preliminary data from the Drug Abuse Warning Network (DAWN) for the first 6 months of 1995 show that individuals suffering negative health consequences of illicit drug use continue to seek services from hospital emergency departments (EDs) across the nation. Significant increases were found among ED episodes related to cocaine (12%), heroin (27%), marijuana (32%), and methamphetamine (35%) compared with data from the first half of 1994. One possible explanation for the increases in the cocaine- and heroin-related ED visits is that a cohort of users is experiencing chronic effects of long-term drug use. "DAWN data show that the proportion of drug-related episodes among persons aged 35 years and older has been increasing. As drug users age . . . they become susceptible to a variety of health problems which are exacerbated by drug use, especially the cumulative effects of prolonged use. These individuals may be using emergency departments for treatment of nonurgent health problems" (p. 13).

**Estimated Number (in Thousands) of Cocaine-, Heroin-, Marijuana-, and Methamphetamine-Related U.S. Emergency Department Episodes, First Half 1990 - First Half 1995**



SOURCE: Adapted by CESAR from data from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), "Preliminary Estimates from the Drug Abuse Warning Network," Advance Report Number 14, May 1996. For more information, contact SAMHSA at 301-443-7980.

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