

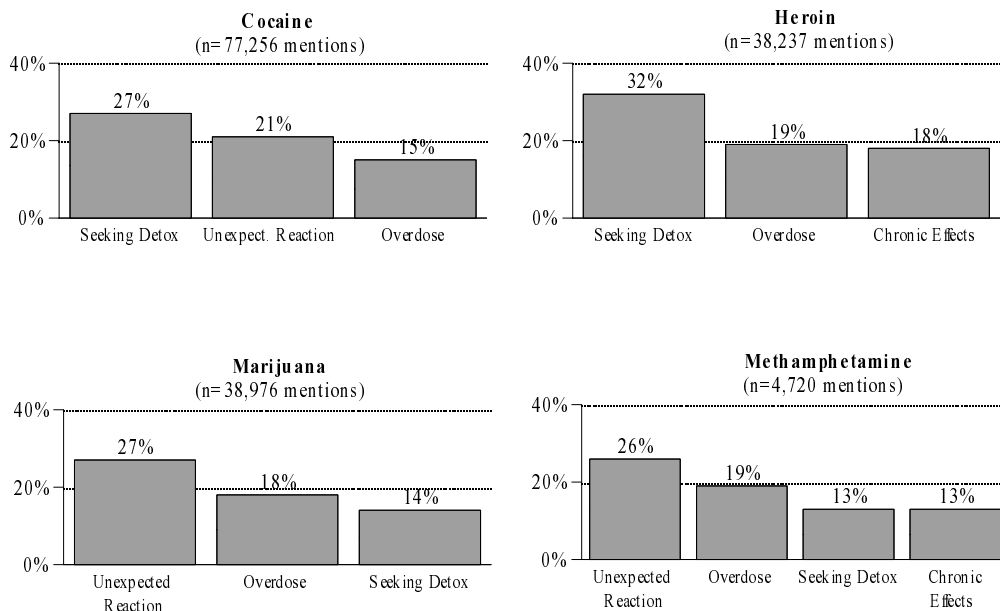
A Weekly FAX from the Center for Substance Abuse Research

University of Maryland, College Park

Reasons for Drug-Related Emergency Department Visits Vary by Drug

Seeking detoxification is the most commonly cited reason for cocaine- and heroin-related emergency department (ED) visits, according to data from the national Drug Abuse Warning Network (DAWN). In the first half of 1999, 27 percent of cocaine mentions in drug-related ED visits and 32 percent of heroin mentions were related to detoxification. Marijuana and methamphetamine mentions, however, were more likely to be associated with unexpected reactions, where the drugs' effects were different than anticipated (e.g., caused hallucinations). All four drugs had approximately the same percentage of mentions related to overdose (around 18%).

Top Three Reasons for U.S. Emergency Department Contact, by Drug Mention January through June 1999



NOTE: These estimates are based on a representative sample of non-Federal, short-stay hospitals with 24-hour emergency departments in the coterminous U.S.

SOURCE: Adapted by CESAR from data from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), Mid-Year 1999 Preliminary Emergency Department Data from the Drug Abuse Warning Network, DAWN Series: D-14, March 2000. Available online at http://www.samhsa.gov/OAS/DAWN/DawnMidYr/99mid_year.pdf

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