

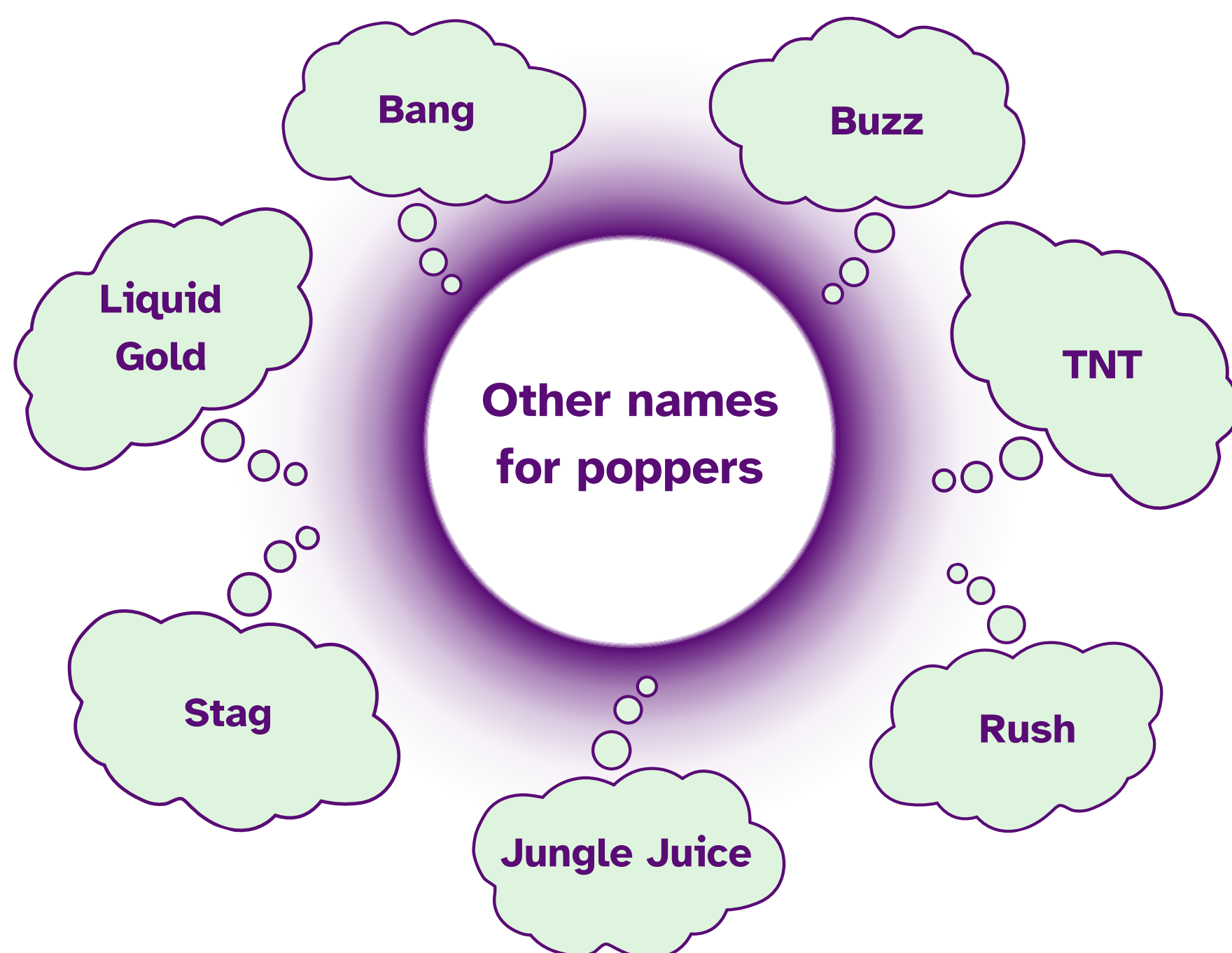
# POPPERS (ALKYL NITRITES)

## WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

### What are they?

### Poppers (alkyl nitrites) are inhalants

Poppers (alkyl nitrites) are depressants, meaning that they slow down messages between your brain and your body. Alkyl nitrites are used medically to treat various conditions by increasing blood and oxygen supply to the heart. They are also used non-medically to create a sense of euphoria and relaxation and to enhance sexual experiences. Poppers contain chemical substances similar to prescription medications. These products are not regulated by the government and can be extremely dangerous.



### How are they used?

Poppers are a liquid and come in a small bottle. They can be consumed in several ways.

**Sniffing:** Inhaling through the nose.

**Huffing:** Inhaling through the mouth.

**Bagging:** Inhaling through a paper bag placed over the mouth, nose, or head.

**Poppers liquid is poisonous.** Ingesting it can result in blindness, organ failure, brain damage and death. Skin contact can result in rashes and burns.



### What are the effects?



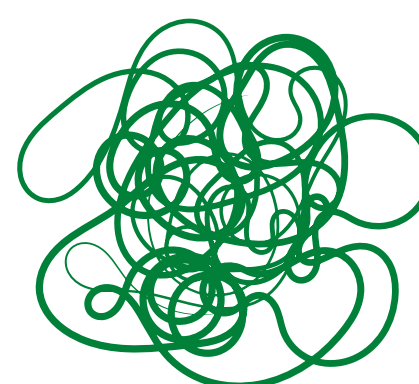
Poppers cause a head rush seconds after use. This can lead to nausea, headache and dizziness.



In rare instances, poppers use can cause a drastic spike in heart rate, leading to heart failure and death.



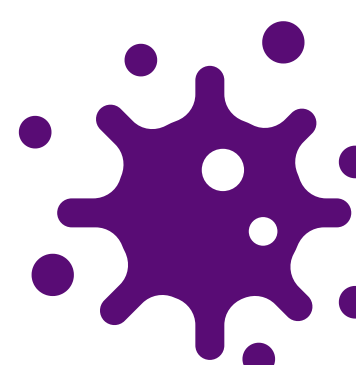
The effects of poppers can look like alcohol intoxication (e.g. a loss of coordination and slurred speech).



Poppers can lower inhibitions, which increases the risk of having unsafe sex and accidental injury.



Poppers use has been linked to vision problems and can result in permanent blindness.



Long-term use can damage the immune system and is associated with a higher risk of infectious disease.

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## When do you seek emergency help?



**Overdose or poisoning:** The result of overconsuming poppers or combining it with other substances. Poppers use can cause methemoglobinemia, a condition causing decreased oxygen flow to the body's organs. This condition can be fatal.

**Signs:** Fainting, weakness, chest pain, shortness of breath, fast or irregular heartbeat, blueish lips or fingers.

**Get help right away!** Inhalant overdoses or poisonings are an emergency.

### Did you know?

The effects of poppers can vary greatly when mixed with other substances. People taking certain medications for high blood pressure, migraines, and erectile dysfunction are at particular risk of health complications.

Mixing with other non-medical substances (particularly stimulants like cocaine or methamphetamine) dramatically increases risk.

## How to stay safer

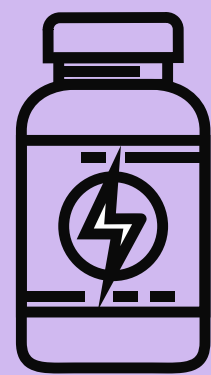
- 1 **Avoiding use** is the best way to stay safe, but that may not be realistic for everybody.
- 2 **Don't mix!** Mixing poppers with other substances, including certain medications for high blood pressure, migraines, and erectile dysfunction are at particular risk of health complications.
- 3 **Plan for safety.** Have a ride arranged for after you use poppers. Bring condoms in case sex is a possibility.
- 4 **Avoid bagging.** Using a bag to take poppers can lead to accidental suffocation. If using a bag, use paper not plastic.
- 5 **Moderate use.** Regular use can affect your health and relationships with others.
- 6 **Have a friend with you** in case you need help.
- 7 **Timing matters!** Avoid using poppers if you have to go to work or school, as they can impair your judgement and coordination.

## Unregulated Products

Alkyl nitrites are not permitted for nonmedical use in Canada.

However, unregulated alkyl nitrites (poppers) are sold in specialty stores disguised as other products, such as air fresheners, leather cleaners and solvents.

Poppers are sold in small bottles which resemble energy shots. **Accidental ingestion can cause injury or death.**



For more information on inhalants, visit: [decyde.ca/other](https://decyde.ca/other)

For more information visit us at:

[www.DECYDE.ca](https://www.DECYDE.ca)