

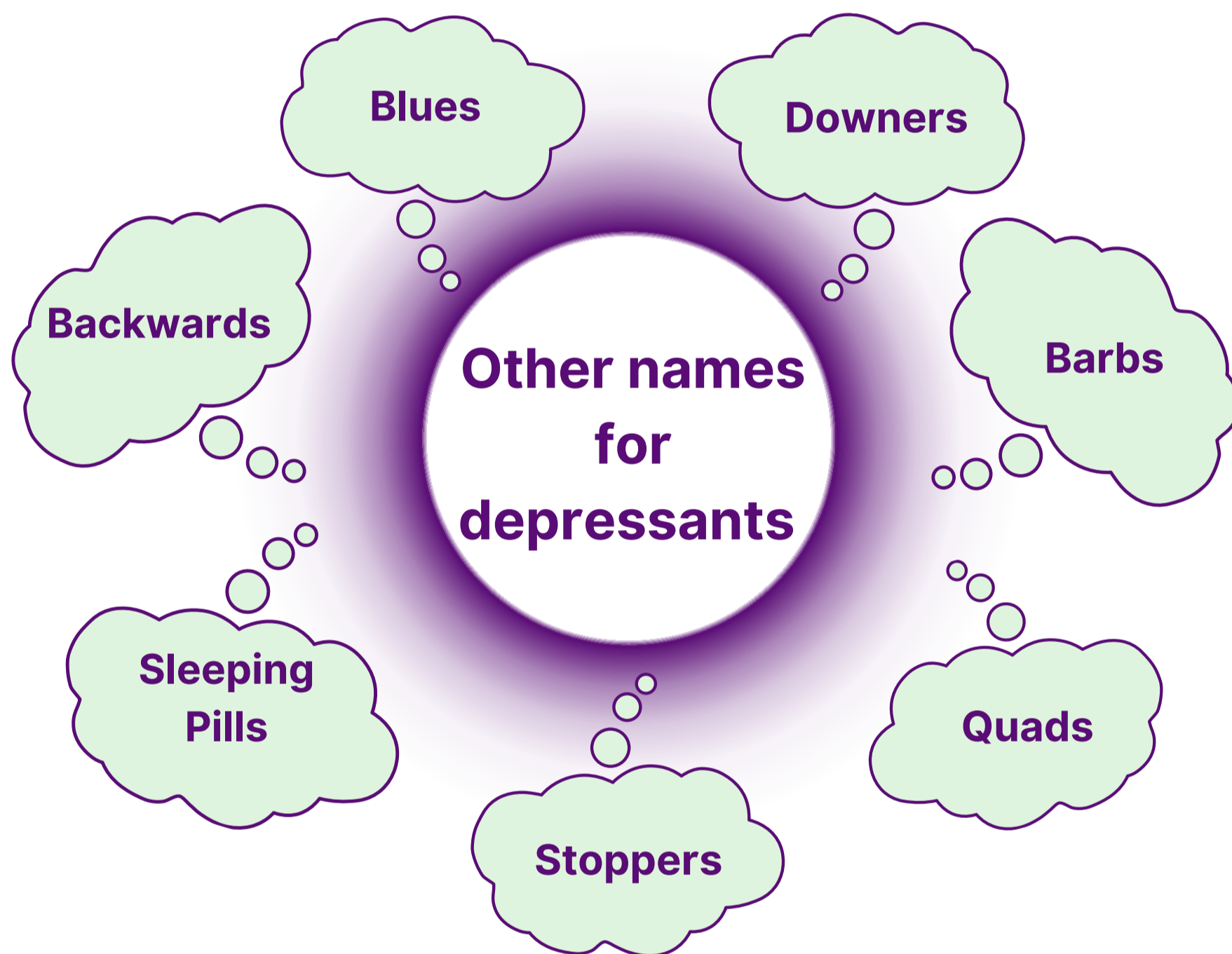
DEPRESSANTS

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

What are they?

Depressants are a group of substances that slow down messages between your brain and your body. They are used for their relaxing and euphoric effect. Depressants include alcohol, opioids (including narcotics), benzodiazepines, nicotine, barbiturates, date rape drugs, and sleeping medication like zopiclone.

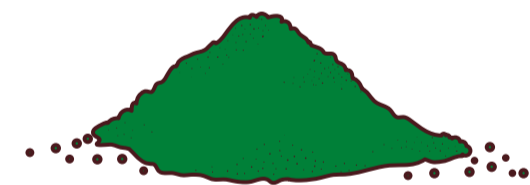
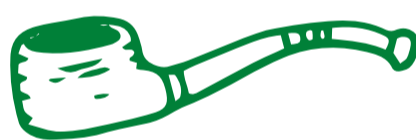
For information on individual types of depressants, check out our website: decyde.ca/substance-snapshots/substance-snapshots/#depressants



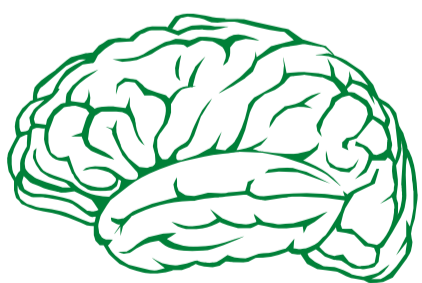
How are they used?

Depressants can be crushed and snorted through the nose, taken orally, injected, or smoked.

While many depressants can be legally prescribed, they can also be obtained illegally.



What are the effects?



Depressants mainly work in the brain. This can reduce stress and anxiety but it can also slow or stop your breathing.



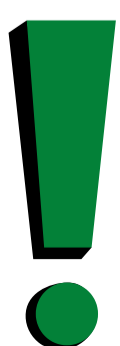
Depressants can reduce inhibitions and judgment, making accidents a higher risk.



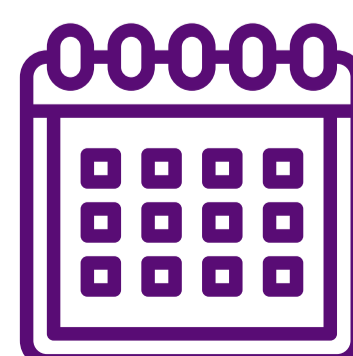
Depressants can also make you sleepy, especially when combined with other sedating substances.



Depressants can reduce memory- this can even make it hard to retain information.



Depressants cause a slower reaction time and poor coordination.



Long term use of depressants can cause a dependence and withdrawal. Withdrawal of some depressants, like alcohol, can cause seizures.

DEPRESSANTS

When do you seek emergency help?



Overdose or poisoning: Taking more of a depressant than your body can handle.

Signs: Slow, irregular, or no breathing; difficulty walking, talking, and speaking; unconsciousness; blue lips and nails; cold and clammy skin; gurgling or snoring.

Get help right away! Give naloxone if opioids were used. This is a medical emergency.


Did you know?

Taking stimulants and depressants together doesn't cancel out the effect of either substance.

It actually sends conflicting messages to your body, putting more stress on your brain and heart!



How to stay safer?

 **Not using depressants** is the best way to stay safer and avoid harms.

If you still decide to use depressants, consider these harm reduction strategies:

1

Don't mix! Combining depressants together can cause an overdose at much lower doses than expected.

2

Plan for safety. Arrange a ride for after you use depressants. Bring condoms if you think sex is a possibility.

3

Start low and go slow. Starting with a small amount lowers the risk of accidentally taking too much.

4

Moderate use. Regularly using a depressant can affect your health and relationships with others.

5

Don't use alone. Always have a buddy with you, and check in with friends to make sure they get home safely. Share your location with someone you trust.

6

Timing matters! Avoid using depressants if you have work or school.

Naloxone Kits

Naloxone can save a life!

It temporarily reverse the effects of opioids.

Check out our naloxone instructions:

decyde.ca/educational-materials/#substance-use



Call 811 to find out where you can get a kit



For more information visit us at:

www.DECYDE.ca

SWAP provides clean, proper supplies for injecting, smoking, and snorting drugs.
To find out more, call or text **709-757-7927**.

These documents are intended to support educators in their delivery of drug education. They are not for direct student use unless deemed developmentally appropriate.

References:
1. Brands B, Sproule B, Marshman J, Ontario. Addiction Research F. Drugs & drug abuse : a reference text. Toronto, Ont.: Addiction Research Foundation; 1998
<https://www.drugfreeworld.org/drugfacts/prescription/depressants.html>

2. Black E. Polydrug use: What you need to know about mixing drugs. In: National Drug and Alcohol Research Centre UoNSW, editor. 2014. <https://www.ccsa.ca/sites/default/files/2019-06/CCSA-Canadian-Drug-Summary-Sedatives-2019-en.pdf> <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S0272523121011175>



Empowering Youth to
DECIDE

