Methamphetamine 101

Faces of Meth
International Association of Drilling Contractors Meeting
July 17, 2014
Objectives

• Discuss what, who, when, where, why and how of meth

• Discuss and illustrate why there is such concern from health and medical professionals

• Discuss intervention strategies and sources of additional information
What is “Methamphetamine”?

- Methamphetamine is a powerful central nervous system stimulant. The drug works directly on the brain and spinal cord by interfering with normal neurotransmitter activity.

- Neurotransmitters are chemical substances naturally produced within nerve cells used to communicate with each other and send messages to influence and regulate our thinking and all other systems throughout the body.
When and how did meth start

- Germany late 19th Century, Japan early 20th Century
- Issued to military during both World Wars
- Prescribed as diet aid and antidepressant in 1950’s.
- Throughout the 1960’s it was used as a stimulant by college students, truck drivers and athletes which spread the abuse. The increased availability of injectable methamphetamine, worsened the abuse.
When and how did meth start

• The US government made it illegal for most use in 1970.

• Organized crime controlled most of the production and distribution of the drug.

• Most users at the time lived in rural communities and could not afford the more expensive cocaine.

• Mexican drug cartels began setting up labs in 1990’s.
What other names is it known by

- Chrissie
- Crystal
- Crystal meth
- Crank
- Glass
- Go fast
- Ice
- Peanut butter
- Pink champagne
- Rock candy
- Shabu
- Tina
- Tweak
- Yaba
What does it look like?

- It can be found as a powder that is clear, milky white or yellowish brown (“crystal meth”).

- It can also look like chipped ice, rock salt or chipped glass (“ice”).

- It ranges in color from white, yellow, orange, pink, or brown.

- Color variations are due to differences in chemicals used to produce it and the expertise of the cooker.
Where is it made?

• Meth can be made almost anywhere – in a basement, the backseat of a car – even alongside a road.

• Most common meth lab facilities were single-family houses, followed by apartments, mobile homes, vehicles in traffic stops, garages, trailers, motels/hotels, businesses, desert, and storage.
What do I look for if I suspect a meth lab in my neighborhood?

- Unusual, strong odors similar to that of fingernail polish remover or cat urine
- Renters who pay cash
- Large amounts of products such as cold medicines, antifreeze, drain cleaner, lantern fuel, red stained coffee filters, empty match boxes, matchsticks, batteries, duct tape, clear glass beakers and containers
- Residences with windows blacked out and lots of nighttime traffic.
Rats love human waste, but can’t stand to be near a meth lab.

Think about it.

If roaches can survive a nuclear holocaust, why won’t they go near a meth lab?

Think about it.

Your future stops here.”
What are the ingredients?

- Antifreeze
- Battery acid
- Drain cleaner
- Hydrochloric acid
- Lantern fuel
- Lye
- Paint thinner
- Red phosphorous
- Over-the-counter cold and asthma medications
What are some signs that a person may be using meth?

• Anxiety  
• Nervousness  
• Incessant talking  
• Extreme moodiness and irritability  
• Purposeless, repetitious behavior, such as picking at skin or pulling out hair
What are some signs that a person may be using meth?

- Sleep disturbances
- False sense of confidence and power
- Aggressive or violent behavior
- Disinterest in previously enjoyed activities
- Severe depression
Meth in the news

- Florida Couple Arrested For Making Meth At Library
- Utah mother accused of slaying six infants was hooked on meth
- Madison County road crews find meth labs along highways
- Mom accused of pimping daughter for crack, meth and money
- 'It was the meth': Teenager who shot dead his mother and hospitalized his father at their suburban home tearfully blames drug abuse for his action
Medical and Psychosocial Effects of Methamphetamine
Acute Methamphetamine Effects

It feels like excitement...
Acute Physical Effects

Increases

• Blood Pressure
• Energy
• Heart Rate
• Pupil Size
• Respiration
• Sensory Acuity
Acute Physical Effects

Decreases

• Appetite

• Sleep
Acute Psychological Effects

Increases

• Alertness
• Energy
• Feeling of Confidence
• Mood
• Sex drive
• Talkativeness
Acute Psychological Effects

Decreases

• Boredom

• Loneliness

• Timidity
Chronic Methamphetamine Effects

It feels like excitement gone bad...
Chronic Physical Effects

- Damage to the brain similar to Alzheimer’s disease, stroke and epilepsy
- Destruction of tissues in nose if sniffed
- Infectious diseases and abscesses if injected
- Liver, kidney and lung damage
Chronic Physical Effects

- Malnutrition / Weight loss
- Oily skin/complexion
- Sinus infection
- Sweating
- Permanent damage to blood vessels of heart and brain, high blood pressure leading to heart attacks, strokes and death
Chronic Physical Effects

- Respiratory (breathing) problems if smoked
- Severe tooth decay
- Tremor
- Weakness
Psychological / Psychiatric Effects

- Anger
- Apathy
- Loss of Concentration
- Confusion
Psychological / Psychiatric Effects

• Dependence
• Depression
• Disorientation
• Fatigue
• Hallucinations
Psychiatric Consequences

• Panic disorders
• Paranoid reactions
• Permanent memory loss
• Psychotic reactions
• Rapid addiction
Faces of Meth

One picture is worth a thousand words.
“Speed Bumps”
What treatments are available?

- There are currently no specific medications that counteract the effects of methamphetamine.

- The most effective treatments for methamphetamine addiction are behavioral therapies.
Sources of Information

- http://endmeth.info/
- http://www.facesofmeth.us
- http://methprevention.com
- http://www.mcso.us
- http://www.drugfreeworld.org/
- http://www.pbrcada.org/
Were objectives met?

- Discussed what, who, when, where, why and how of meth

- Discussed and illustrated why there is such concern from health and medical professionals

- Discussed intervention strategies and sources of additional information
QUESTIONS???