



Symptoms of Current Drug Use

The use of each substance is associated with a cluster of unique symptoms, which are described in detail in the “Parent Power Glossary for Parents and Teens” in *How to Raise a Drug-Free Kid: The Straight Dope for Parents*.

Here are some of the general symptoms that may reveal current drug use:

- Excessive talking, rapid or slurred speech
- Bizarre or paranoid comments
- Excessive forgetfulness
- Difficulty expressing thoughts
- Lack of coordination, poor balance, tipsy walking
- Spaciness, inability to concentrate or follow a conversation
- Bloodshot eyes
- Dilated or very small pupils
- Excessive sweating, jitters, and jumpiness
- Nodding off (eyes closing, head falling forward)
- Nosebleeds, excessively rubbing or wiping the nose
- Constantly popping breath mints, chewing gum, or drinking a flavored drink immediately before talking to you (to cover the smell of alcohol or smoke)
- Missing prescription drugs like OxyContin or Xanax
- Possession of drug paraphernalia such as tin foil, rolling papers, pipes, straws, plastic bags
- Increased accumulation of inhalable products such as glue, hairspray, or nail polish
- Increased accumulation of over-the-counter cold medicine
- Use of incense, room deodorant, or perfumes to hide smoke or chemical odors on clothing or in a room

