

# Inhalants

## Volatile Solvents

Gasoline, Paint Thinner, Glue, Cleaning fluids, etc.

### What is it?

Inhalants are volatile solvents used in everyday tasks that are not intended to be inhaled. Solvents are inhaled through a bag, or a cloth. Inhalation, also known as huffing, sniffing or bagging, affects how we think and feel. It slows down the heart rate, breathing, thoughts and actions.

### Why do people use it?

- ◆ Produces similar effects to alcohol
- ◆ To help relax and to be more open socially and emotionally
- ◆ To not think about undesirable aspects of life

### What can go wrong?

- ◆ May affect people differently; Some feel anxious and panicked
- ◆ Depression & suicidal behaviour
- ◆ Suffocation, seizures, overdose and cardiac arrest
- ◆ Sudden sniffing death
- ◆ Highly flammable substances may ignite
- ◆ Can affect balance and coordination, making someone more likely to fall
- ◆ Consistent use may lead to memory loss, learning, coordination and movement

### How does it work?

Inhalants are absorbed through the lungs, to the blood, and to the brain. Inhaling solvents slows down the communication between nerve cells and the brain, resulting in a feeling of relaxation.

Information adapted from [heretohelp.ca](http://heretohelp.ca), [camh.ca](http://camh.ca) & [towardtheheart.com](http://towardtheheart.com)

For more information visit their websites.

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## Harm Reduction

1. Try to limit the amount and type of solvent inhaled at one time.
2. Use in an environment that is safe and comfortable.
3. Try not to use alone. Having someone there to use with raises chances of getting help if something were to go wrong.

### What to look for:

1. Loss of consciousness (passing out)
2. If a person passes out with a bag attached to their mouth, they risk losing oxygen and choking on their own vomit.

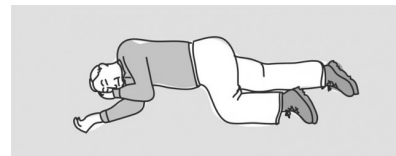
## Overdose

### What to do:

## CALL 9-1-1

Remain calm and stay with the person until help arrives.

If you have to leave the person unattended, put them in the recovery position, as below.



### Discovery Youth & Family Substance Use Services

Victoria/South Island: 250-519-5313  
Cowichan Valley: 250-737-2029  
Nanaimo/Ladysmith: 250-739-5790  
Oceanside area: 250-947-8215  
Mt Waddington area: 250-902-6063

