

# Viagra™, Amyl & Crystal

## 2MIXorNOT2MIX...





Trying Viagra™ for crystal dick? Has amyl become your “pick-me-up” during weekend sex-fests? Some men are using crystal, amyl, and Viagra™ together. Using these drugs at the same time can cause serious problems.

To keep your party from ending in casualty or worse, here are some things to know about mixing these drugs into your sex play.



# CRYSTAL

Crystal is a stimulant that sends your body into over-drive. To handle this, crystal shrinks your veins, speeds up your heart rate, and increases blood pressure. It also floods your brain with chemicals that give you lots of energy. You may feel euphoric, confident or even paranoid. Crystal can boost sex drive, delay orgasm and heighten your sense of pleasure. Crystal can cause depression, sexual dysfunction, heart problems, psychosis, and long-term brain damage.

If you use crystal

- Eat, drink plenty of water, and get some sleep. That's the first rule of safer speed use.
- Take frequent breaks from using. Don't get high every weekend or stay up past one or two days.
- If you inject, never share needles or equipment. Always use new, clean equipment.
- Watch for signs of addiction or problem use. Don't wait to get help (check out our resource list).

*“I've used crystal for a year and can't get hard anymore, Why?”*

“Crystal dick” is common among crystal users. It's most likely the result of vein damage and changes in brain chemicals that cause an erection. Sometimes, these changes are permanent. Will Viagra™ help? Reports from crystal users vary. Sometimes taking a break from crystal does the trick. Over time, many men see their erections improve once they stop crystal for a while. Before you start popping little blue wonder pills, talk to your doctor first!



Damon Hart-Davis - gallery.hd.org

# VIAGRA™

Viagra™ (sildenafil) is used to treat impotence (the inability to get or keep a hard-on). Viagra™ opens your blood vessels to let more blood flow into your penis. As a result, your blood pressure drops and your heart speeds up. This can cause dizziness, headaches, facial flushing or blue tinted vision. Take too much Viagra™ and you might feel breathless, have chest pains, or black out. You might also get an erection that won't go down. This can be painful and cause long-term damage to penile tissue.

## **Never use Viagra™ with amyl.**

Together, these drugs can have a fatal effect on blood pressure and heart rate. Several deaths related to the overuse of Viagra™ have occurred.

### If you use Viagra™

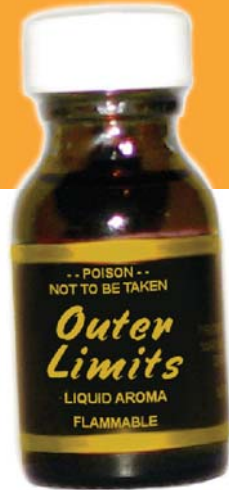
- Get a prescription from your doctor. Limit your dose to what your doctor recommends. This will help you avoid risky side effects.
- Give it time to work. Viagra™ takes about an hour to reach full effect.
- Absolutely avoid amyl. This combination is very dangerous and can be fatal. Don't use Viagra™ and amyl together or within 24 hours of each other.

Viagra (Sildenafil), Cialis (Tadalafil) and Levitra (Vardenafil) all have similar effects and interactions. In this booklet we simply use Viagra to refer to all of these medications

# AMYL

Amyl is the name for “poppers”; liquid forms of amyl or butyl nitrite. Some guys inhale the fumes during sex to enhance orgasm, prolong sex, or relax their butt muscles for easier penetration or fisting. After a quick rush, you may feel light headed, nauseous, or flushed. Expect a slamming headache in the morning! Amyl is not physically addictive, but you can develop a tolerance. After frequent use, some guys can't have or enjoy sex without them.

Amyl opens your blood vessels and can dramatically lower your blood pressure. If you use too much, your blood pressure can drop too low. You could feel faint or pass out. Amyl also puts extra strain on your heart. Going overboard on amyl can increase your chance of heart attack. The chances are even higher when you add dancing, crystal, cocaine, Viagra™, or intense sex.

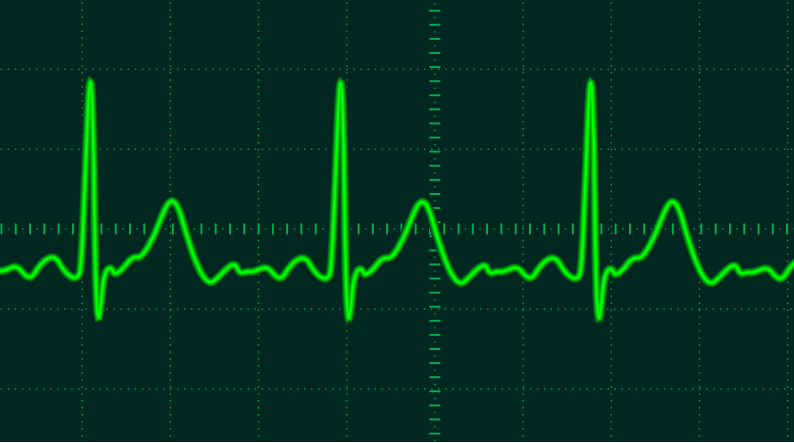


If you use Amyl

- Leave some time between whiffs. Let yourself recover before taking another hit.
- Don't let the liquid touch your nose, mouth, or skin and don't swallow it. Amyl is a harsh chemical liquid that burns!
- Don't confuse a bottle of amyl with GHB. GHB comes in little bottles like amyl but should not have a smell.

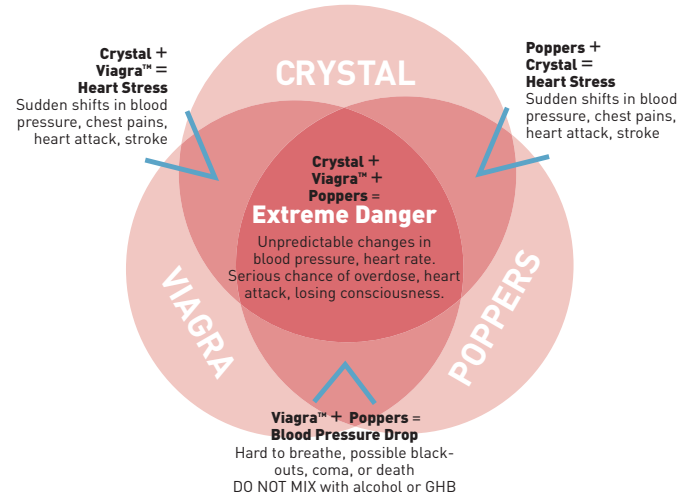
*“Compared to crystal, amyl seems like candy, so what's the big deal?”*

Amyl may seem mild compared to other “harder” drugs, but they are not harmless. Amyl can cause skin disorders, rashes, and tissue damage in your nose. Amyl can block your blood's ability to carry oxygen which can lead to death. Amyl can also cause brain damage, but how much isn't clear. And the more you use, the worse the damage can get. Research has shown that amyl weakens parts of your immune system and may actually promote the growth of Kaposi's Sarcoma tumors.



# AVOIDING THE EMERGENCY ROOM

Mixing crystal, Viagra™ or amyl at the same time can have very serious health risks. The danger lies in how these drugs affect your heart rate and blood pressure. Using two drugs together that both lower your blood pressure can cause fainting, unconsciousness, coma or even death. Using two drugs that speed up your heart can send your blood pressure zooming towards a heart attack or stroke. Strenuous all-night dancing, intense sex, dehydration, and lack of sleep could make the problem worse. So can alcohol, ecstasy, GHB, or Special K.



**DON'T MIX Crystal, Viagra™ and Amyl!!!**

*“But I love all three!!  
I don't want to quit any! What can I do?”*

You don't have to quit any of them – **Just don't use them together!** That's your safest choice. If you do choose to mix, then at least cut back on one drug. This isn't the best option, but it might lessen your risks.

Cutting back can mean using less of a drug or using it less often. One may be easier for you than the other. So, how do you decide?

In general, **you have the most control over the drug you do first.** Your judgement is usually better at the beginning. Once you start adding drugs or getting surprise offers of drugs, your choices may not be the best. Use less of your first drug.

But what if your first drug is the one you love most and can't cut down? Then ask, **Which drug can I say "no" to most easily?** For example, if you can't resist crystal, then skip or do less amyl.



## GETTING HIGH & GETTING HIV

Can crystal or amyl make it easier to get HIV? In many ways, the answer is yes. Here's why:

- When you're high **you may lose good judgment.** You may intend to be safe, but in the heat of the moment, condoms might never cross your mind.
- **Amyl opens blood vessels,** sending more blood to areas like your dick and arse. This makes it easier for HIV and other STI's to get into your bloodstream.

- Crystal, alcohol, or all-night dancing and sex can dehydrate you and **dry up the natural lubricant in your arse**. A dry, cracked butt is a welcome mat for viruses and germs.
- Amyl and crystal can each reduce the pain of anal sex. But long, hard anal sex beyond your normal limits can **create small tears and more openings for HIV**.
- Guys who use crystal or amyl tend to have **more sex with more partners**.



## SEXUAL HEALTH

And it's not just about HIV. There are plenty of other sexually transmitted infections like syphilis, gonorrhoea, herpes, and hepatitis B that are just waiting to find you. Having another STI can make it easier to get or pass on HIV.

*“So what's a crystal user to do?”*

Prepare for safety BEFORE you get high or get into sex. Before any dick goes into any arse, get the condoms out. Talk about what is OK and not OK. Also, be more consistent with your safety plan when you're NOT high. For many guys, the safer they are unwired, the safer they are high. It just becomes a natural part of their sexual practice.

Here are some other tips for safer drug and sex play:

- Don't buy into "the drugs made me do it" excuse. Plenty of guys use speed and other sex drugs and still use condoms or negotiate safety. You can too.
- Plan ahead BEFORE you get high! If you think you might have sex later, take condoms and lube. Keep them with your drugs, wallet, or keys.
- Lube, lube, more lube – and always waterbased lube!
- Condoms and lube may wear out before you do. Check them often during sex, when you change position, or withdraw.



## HIV POSITIVE?

# THERE'S MORE!

Some men with HIV turn to crystal, Viagra™ and amyl to spice up sex lives sometimes dampened by low testosterone levels, medications, depression, infections and simply getting older. But many of these problems can be helped by a good doctor. For example, if your testosterone is low, testosterone is the solution - not Viagra™. If you're depressed, maybe you need an antidepressant, not more crystal.

Crystal, amyl, and some HIV meds get broken down in the same liver pathway. Since only one drug can enter at a time, the other drugs get backed up. The HIV meds reach this pathway first, so crystal and Viagra™ can build up, sometimes to dangerous levels. Your heart may not be able to handle the extra stress of so much Viagra™ or crystal in your system.

The following HIV Medications increase the levels of both crystal and Viagra™:

- Protease inhibitors (especially ritonavir (Norvir) and PI's containing ritonavir
- Delavirdine (Rescriptor)
- Itraconazole (Sporanox), ketoconazole (Nizoral) (anti-funguals)
- Erythromycin, clarithromycin, azithromycin (Zithromax) (antibiotics)

As far as we know, neither Viagra™ nor crystal seems to affect the way anti-retroviral meds work. However, forgetting to take your meds while you're high can have an impact on drug resistance and viral load. Here are some tips on handling drug use and HIV meds:

- **Always take your HIV meds as prescribed.** Taking frequent "drug holidays" to get high could impact your viral load. Over time, your meds could lose their effect.
- **Be alert to any changes in your high** after you start a new HIV medication. Do you feel "higher," stay up longer, have more paranoia or a harder crash? These could signal drug interactions. Tell your doctor.
- **Use less crystal.** Try one-third or even one-half your normal amount. If you just can't stop at one hit or say "no" to that extra bump, talk to your doctor about options.
- **Take less Viagra™.** If you take protease inhibitors, the makers of Viagra™ suggest using only 25mg (half the standard 50mg dose) within 48 hours. Start low and see what results you get.
- **Don't follow advice from well-meaning friends.** Their experience and their HIV are not yours. Talk with your doctor.

*“My doctor always lectures me about my crystal use, so I don’t talk about it anymore, I’d rather avoid the subject than listen to that every time.”*

A lot of men who use drugs feel judged and intimidated by their doctors. But your doctor does need to know about your drug use: both medical and recreational. Otherwise, he or she could prescribe a medication or dose that doesn’t mix well with crystal. If your doctor won’t talk respectfully and openly about your drug use, tell him or her how you feel. If talking it through doesn’t work - **get a new doctor!**



## STILL HAVE QUESTIONS?

Still have questions about safer crystal or other drug use? QAHC provides reliable, peerbased information and services to gay and bisexual men. Our staff and peer educators can answer questions about crystal, party drugs, and safer sex or needle use. If you need help with life problems, managing your use or feel you want to quit, speed-savvy counselors at QuIHN aren't homophobic and can also help. And both services are **FREE**. You don't have to quit or even want to quit to get help. You'll find our numbers in the contacts list.

## Contacts

### **Queensland Association for Healthy Communities (QAHC)**

Brisbane and South East Qld	07 3017 1777
Men's Health Line	1800 155 141
Cairns & North Qld	07 4041 5451
Sunshine Coast & Central Qld	07 5451 1118

————— [www.qahc.org.au](http://www.qahc.org.au) —————

### **QuiHN**

Brisbane	07 3620 8111
Gold Coast	07 5520 7900
Sunshine Coast	07 5443 9576
Cairns	07 4051 4742

————— [www.quihn.org](http://www.quihn.org) —————

**Alcohol and Drug Information Service** 1800 177 833

