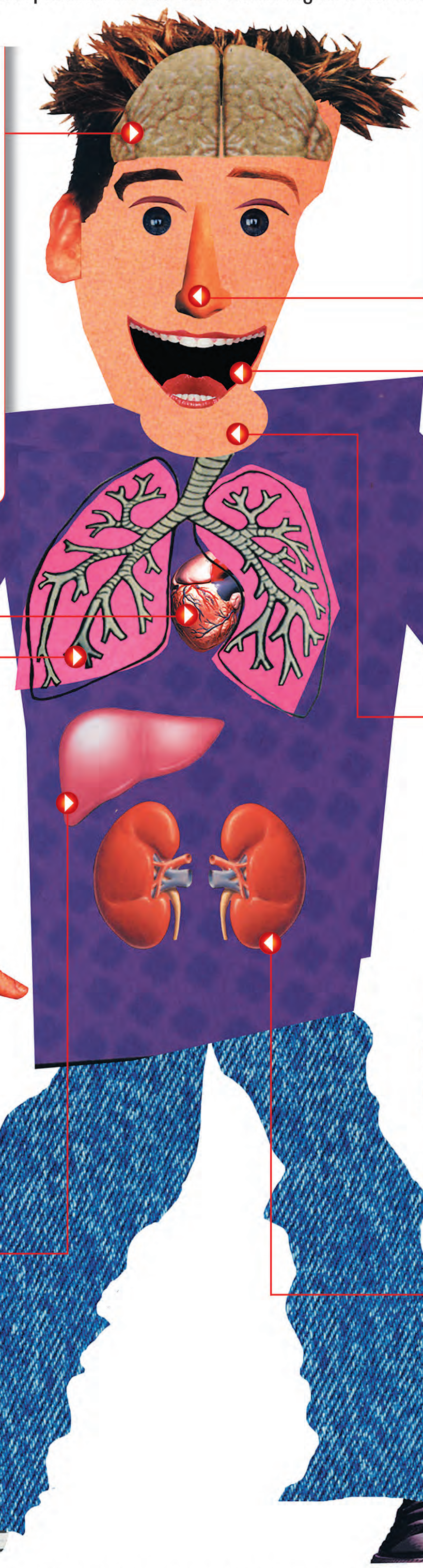
SCHOLASTIC

HEADS UP REAL NEWS ABOUT DRUGS AND YOUR BODY

www.teens.drugabuse.gov

Drugs and the Body—It Isn't Pretty

Nicotine. Heroin. Cocaine. Marijuana. Inhalants. Methamphetamine. Steroids. Check out this diagram to find out how your brain and body can be changed by drugs.

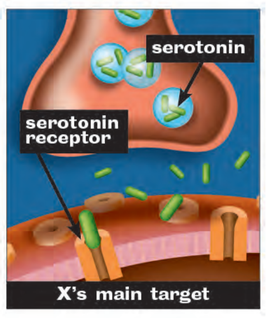


BRAIN

Teen Brain Under Construction
The teen brain is still developing during the years that a teen is growing, so it is particularly vulnerable to the effects of drugs.

Hey, Where Did My Brain Go?
Inhalants kill brain cells and damage their ability to process information. They can mess up your mind forever.

Tired and Moody
A chemical called serotonin helps you stay in a good mood and get enough sleep. Ecstasy messes with the serotonin in your brain.



X's main target

Brain Change
Methamphetamine use can change the structure and function of the brain in regions that control emotion, memory, and motivation.

Super Slow
Messages speed from your brain to your muscles at more than 200 miles per hour. Inhalants can put the brakes on quick communication.

What Was That?
A working short-term memory is required for learning and performing tasks that call for more than one or two steps. Marijuana can impair short-term memory.

A Case of the Blahs
The use of any addictive drug can make you lose the ability to feel normal happiness and pleasure.

NOSE

No More Nostrils
Snorting cocaine can create pimple-like abscesses that can turn into raw holes. The holes can eat away the cartilage that divides the nose.

MOUTH

Brush much?

Not a Good Look
Tobacco use, including smoking and chewing tobacco ("snuff"), can lead to disfiguring cancers of the mouth, gum disease, and decaying teeth. Smoking or chewing tobacco also discolors teeth.

Tense Teeth
Ecstasy use causes involuntary teeth clenching. Some users need to wear dental mouth guards. Others actually use pacifiers.

"Meth Mouth"
Grisly effects for methamphetamine users can include "meth mouth," in which gums decay and teeth become rotten.

HEART

Body Blocking
Steroid use can lead to blocked blood flow to the brain or heart. The result: a stroke or a heart attack.

Heart Attack
Even very fit athletes can have a heart attack if they use cocaine or methamphetamine.

Out of Sync
Inhalants can disrupt normal heart rhythms, which can cause a heart attack.

SKIN

Pizza Face
Steroids can cause acne pimples to pop up all over the face of a user.

Up close and pimply

LUNGS

Tar Pit
Sticky, brown tar coats the lungs of smokers. Along with thousands of other toxic chemicals, tar can lead to lung cancer and acute respiratory diseases.

BEFORE Healthy Lung

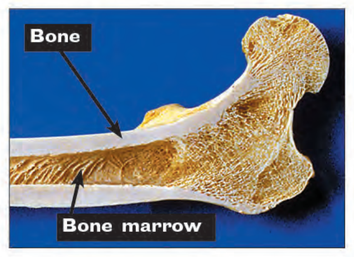
AFTER Smoker's Lung

Poisoned
When someone sniffs inhalants, the toxic gas can replace oxygen in the lungs. Without oxygen, every organ in the body, including the brain, eventually stops working and the person dies.

BONES

Forget About Pro Sports
Steroid use can keep bones from growing. Steroid users may never reach their full adult height.

Down in Your Bones
Inhalants damage the marrow inside of bones.



LIVER

Risky Rupture
Steroid abuse has been associated with liver tumors and blood-filled cysts. Both the tumors and the cysts can rupture, causing internal bleeding.

KIDNEYS

Boiling Over
Ecstasy users risk kidney failure if their body temperature soars and they become dehydrated.

INFECTIONS

Weakening the Body's Defense
People who engage in drug use or high-risk behaviors associated with drug use put themselves at risk for contracting or transmitting viral infections such as human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) and hepatitis. This occurs not only through needle sharing and other unsafe practices of injection drug users, but through the effects of many drugs on decision-making processes, which can have life-altering consequences.

National Institute on Drug Abuse

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

NATIONAL INSTITUTES OF HEALTH

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For more real news about drugs and your body, as well as lessons and activities, go to **www.teens.drugabuse.gov** and **www.scholastic.com/HEADSUP**. For help with a drug problem, call 1-800-662-HELP or go to **www.findtreatment.samhsa.gov.**

Revised 2019

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