

# What Happens To Your Brain When You Use Heroin

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Everyone knows that heroin use is very damaging for the body and dangerous to take in general. But knowing as much as possible about the specifics of it can help to discourage some, and in any case it's just a good idea to be as clued up as possible on the subject. In this article, we are going to look specifically at some of the effects on the brain that occur when you use heroin. Knowing more about this can be helpful in many ways, so take a look at the following for more information – and remember, if you need help, you can always [reach out](#).

## Opioid Receptors

Heroin works by entering the bloodstream and then getting attached to specific molecules on cells known as opioid receptors. Heroin is an opioid, of course, so that is why these receptors pick it up. You have opioid receptors throughout the body, in fact – in the lungs, spinal cord and the brain. But in the brain, there are certain powerful effects that happen as a result of these receptors lighting up.

## Short-Term Effects

In terms of the effects that an individual has in experience after taking heroin, there is often a feeling of euphoria and good feelings that the drug is obviously well-known for. However, these effects will usually come hand in hand with a kind of brain fog, or clouded thoughts, which can be very distressing too.

After a few hours or so that the drug might last, there will often come a stage of drowsiness and depression, with a craving for the drug to bring back the good feelings from earlier. This is an example of heroin changing the pathways in the brain, and is one of the major bases of [addiction](#).

## Changes In The Brain

If you use heroin regularly, there are many changes in the brain that you can expect to find as a result of that, and these are often related directly to the experience of being addicted. There are three major results that can come from these brain changes, and although they might sound like the same thing, they are actually quite distinct. Let's look at these three right now.

### Increasing Tolerance

The more you use heroin, the more of a tolerance your brain develops for it. This means that you need more of it in order to attain the same high that you had before, and it is a sign that your brain is actually learning to operate with the drug being assumed as always being there. This is clearly a hallmark of addiction.

### More Dependence

As well as becoming increasingly tolerant of the drug, you will also notice that your dependence increases with regular use. This is probably the closest to what people generally think of as addiction. With dependence, you feel the need to take the drug again and again, you don't feel normal without it, and you might experience extreme withdrawal effects if you don't get your hit.

### Addiction

In the psychology of all this, however, addiction is its own state altogether, and a very devastating one. In truth, addiction can be thought of as a brain disease, in which people have a lot of difficulty stopping taking the drug in question, even if they really want to do so, and even if they know the [bad effects of the drug on their life](#). By this point, the brain has changed so much that it needs the drug just to feel normal.

## Reward Circuits

In your brain is something that is often referred to as a reward circuit. This is a neural network which activates when you experience good feelings. That can happen as a result of eating some delicious food, exercising, or having sexual intercourse, for instance. But as well as that, it is also what gets completely overloaded when you use a drug like heroin.

This is what causes the euphoric high that heroin can produce, but it is also part of what is so damaging for the brain when you use heroin. The more that you overload your reward circuits, the more you need in order to feel the same level of high. That then means that normal rewards are no longer fulfilling – a state technically known as depression.


The more you use heroin, the less capable your brain is of finding joy in anything else.

The brain is clearly very negatively and strongly affected by heroin use. If you think you might have a problem and need some help, [get in touch](#) today to find out more.


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### Contact Details

1800 Manor Hill Road Findlay, Ohio  
45840  
  
1-855-605-2135



### Hours of Operation

Weekdays	24 Hours
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### About Our Company

Findlay Recovery Center is a drug & alcohol treatment center in Findlay, Ohio that offers evidence-based, detoxification and residential inpatient treatment at an affordable rate.

