

## REDUCING INJURY AND INFECTION

Burns, cuts, sores, and infection are common problems when smoking crack.

- **Hydrate your lips** and protect them from burns with a **clean mouthpiece** and **Pyrex glass pipe**.
- **Use your own equipment, practice safer smoking habits** (in the step-by-step on next page), and **clean your hands and tools before use** to reduce risk of infection.
- **Using your own mouthpiece** is crucial for preventing infection. If you're sharing and don't have a mouthpiece, a tourniquet is a great option since you can move it up and re-wind it around the pipe between hits. This way, each person uses a fresh surface.
- **Do not share pipes** unless you have your own mouthpiece!

## REDUCING RISK OF LUNG-RELATED INJURY

Using unsafe smoking equipment can cause you to **accidentally inhale ash or pieces of metal or plastic**, as well as cause **burns to the lungs**. Since cocaine has numbing effects, you may not even notice these issues when smoking.

- Use a **Pyrex glass pipe** instead of a soda can or plastic bottle
- Use **tightly rolled brass screens or pre-burnt chore boy** instead of steel wool
- Use a **wooden pushstick** instead of metal or plastic

**If you start coughing up dark stuff or have trouble breathing, go see a doctor! Try to give your lungs a break by stopping or reducing smoking for awhile.**

## HAVE A QUESTION ABOUT SAFER SMOKING?

Email us your drug education questions at [info@onpointnyc.org](mailto:info@onpointnyc.org)

## SAFER SMOKING TOOLS

**These tools are included in our safer smoking kit to help reduce the risk of injury and infection.**

### **PYREX GLASS PIPE:**

This pipe is included because its pyrex material is more resistant to burns and breakage-- but still handle with care!

### **CHORE BOY:**

Use this as a filter to prevent accidentally inhaling material.

### **WOODEN PUSHSTICK:**

Use this to insert your filter into the pipe.

### **MOUTHPIECE:**

Slide this over your pipe end to help prevent burns. To prevent infection, do not share mouthpieces!

### **ANTISEPTIC WIPES:**

To help prevent infection, use these to disinfect hands and equipment before use

### **CONDOM:**

Always use protection when engaging in sex! WHCP/NYHRE has a variety of condoms available (lubricated, ribbed, flavored, etc.)-- just ask our staff if interested.

### **WATER-BASED LUBE:**

Use this to reduce tearing during sex (caused by crack's dehydrating effects).

### **SUGAR-FREE GUM:**

Chewing sugar-free gum helps preserve teeth enamel, reduce dry mouth, and helps prevent lockjaw.

### **LIP BALM:**

Use this before/after smoking to help prevent lips from drying out and cracking.



# SAFER CRACK SMOKING

## VISIT US!

**Washington Heights Drop-in Center:** 500 W 180th St  
**East Harlem Drop-in Center:** 104-106 E 126th St

## STEP-BY-STEP: HOW TO SMOKE CRACK MORE SAFELY

**Make a plan before you use to avoid unnecessary harm and wasting money**

1. Decide how much you're going to use and put aside money that you'll need for other expenses (like food or rent).
2. Plan to use in a safe place with people you trust.
3. Eat a nutritious meal and hydrate before smoking.
4. A crack high lasts no more than 15 minutes but can have lingering effects-- decide on a time to stop smoking so you can rest and be sober for work or other commitments.
5. Moisturize lips to prevent lips from drying out.
6. Buy from a source you trust and feel comfortable asking questions about effects and cuts. Check for fentanyl with a test strip.

### 1. Clean hands, pipe, and mouthpiece

Use soap and warm water or alcohol pads to clean your hands and smoking equipment.

### 2. Insert the filter (chore boy)

Using a wooden pushstick, insert the filter into the stem. The filter will need to be a small distance from the end of the stem so there is space to put the crack.

### 3. Make sure filter is secure

Use the pushstick to push the filter from both sides to check filter is tightly secured and won't get sucked out when you smoke. Blow through the stem to test it before putting your drugs in.

### 4. Attach mouthpiece

A clean mouthpiece helps prevent burns and infection. Slide your mouthpiece over the stem opposite the filter.

**TIP:** Don't share mouthpieces since it increases infection risk. If you don't have one, you can cover the stem tip with tape, rubber bands, band aids, or a tourniquet.

### 5. Move flame quickly and evenly along stem

Briefly touch flame to stem end to melt the rock. Hold flame next to stem (not directly on it) and move flame quickly along its length to spread out the heat.

**TIP:** The smaller the flame, the better! This helps prevent burning lips or fingers, plus makes a small amount of crack last longer.

### 6. Put pipe down between hits

Enjoy your high by letting the hit take effect before you smoke more. Spacing out hits makes your drugs last longer and gives you a better idea of how much you need to smoke to get the desired effects. It also keeps the pipe from overheating.

## CRACK PIPES AND THE LAW

Carrying a used crack pipes can put you at risk for a paraphernalia charge. Be sure to store your pipe in a safe place when it is not being used.

## CRACK COCAINE AND DEHYDRATION

Smoking crack is **dehydrating**, which means it is especially important to drink lots of water if you smoke! **At least 8-10 glasses a day.** Tobacco and alcohol also increase dehydration, and so try to avoid combining these drugs or at least cut down when smoking crack.

Dehydration increases the risk of injury and infection since it causes chapped lips, dry mouth, and tearing during vaginal/anal sex:

- To reduce dry mouth, **chew sugar-free gum or suck on a hard candy or ice cube after smoking.** This will also prevent lockjaw.
- To prevent tearing during vaginal/anal sex, **use plenty of water-based lube** (not Vaseline or lotion).

## CRACK COCAINE AND OTHER DRUGS

The two most common combinations with cocaine use are **opioids (speedballing) and alcohol.**

- Both of these mixes combine a short-acting stimulant with a longer-acting depressant and so will **disguise how intoxicated you may be from the depressant effects.**
- For this reason, it's especially important to **keep track of how much you're taking and when you've taken each drug.**
- Stimulants normally wear off before depressants and **can disguise how high you are.** Avoid driving or other potentially risky activities when mixing these!