



Educator guide: Inhalants lesson

Recommended for grades:

4th – 5th grades

Time:

3 minutes

National Health Education Standards:

This activity aligns with the following National Health Education Standards:

- Standard 1: Use functional health information to support health and well-being of self and others.
- Standard 7: Demonstrate practices and behaviors to support health and well-being of self and others.

For more information about the National Health Education Standards, visit the SHAPE America website: shapeamerica.org.

Learning objectives:

After completing this lesson students will be able to:

1. Recognize at least three examples of products that are sometimes used as inhalants.
2. Describe two short-term and two long-term health effects of using inhalants.

Lesson description:

In the Inhalants lesson students will learn what inhalants are, the short and long-term effects of inhalants and why getting involved in activities can help them remain drug-free.



Pre and post-test question:

Use this question with your students in any way that you see fit (on paper, using a survey tool etc.). You can also combine questions from various lessons and activities that your students participate in. The correct answer choice is bolded.

1. A person can die the first time they use an inhalant.
 - a. True**
 - b. False

Vocabulary:

Use the following list of vocabulary as a reference for yourself or your students as you complete the Inhalants lesson. You may choose to use this list in any way that fits your needs.

- Absorbed – a way drugs can enter the body by soaking through the skin or mucus membranes inside the mouth, nose or lungs. Example: When using chewing tobacco, the nicotine is absorbed through the mouth or gums.
- Brain – the main organ in the nervous system that controls the body's activities by sending and receiving messages to and from different parts of the body
- Drug – a chemical that changes the way a person's body works
- High – a short period of time when a person feels happy, euphoric or carefree after using drugs
- Huffing – a method of using an inhalant where the user deeply breathes in the substance through the mouth, where it can go into the lungs
- Inhalants – household products or chemicals, like gasoline, cleaning products or aerosols, that are sniffed (through the nose) or huffed (through the mouth) to get a quick high. Because they are typically products that are legal and easy to find, many people may not realize how dangerous and deadly inhalant use can be.
- Long-term effects – health problems or diseases that take a longer time to develop (months or years). An example of a long-term effect of smoking cigarettes is tar building up in the lungs causing breathing problems or lung cancer.
- Lungs – the organs of the body which take in air to provide the body with oxygen, and exhale or get rid of, carbon dioxide. The lungs are part of the respiratory system.
- Short-term effects – the immediate health consequences of drug use. An example of short-term effects from alcohol use is feeling dizzy, making poor decisions and loss of coordination and balance.
- Sniffing – the method of using an inhalant by breathing the substance in through the nose and into the lungs
- Sudden sniffing death syndrome – occurs when the heart beats quickly and irregularly and then suddenly stops. This can happen any time a person uses an inhalant.
- Suffocation – when someone dies because oxygen can't get into the body. This can happen when someone uses inhalants.

Inhalants worksheet

Name: _____ Date: _____

Instructions: Complete this worksheet as you move through the Inhalants lesson.

1. List four examples of inhalants.

- a. _____
- b. _____
- c. _____
- d. _____

2. List three short-term effects of inhalants.

- a. _____
- b. _____
- c. _____

3. List three long-term effects of inhalants.

- a. _____
- b. _____
- c. _____



4. What is sudden sniffing death syndrome

5. What is one new activity you'd like to try in the next year?

Inhalants lesson worksheet answer key

1. List four examples of inhalants.

Glue, paint thinner, gasoline, permanent markers, white-out, hair spray, spray paint, cleaning products

2. List three short-term effects of inhalants.

A short high, sleepiness, staggering, dizziness, confusion

3. List three long-term effects of inhalants.

Headaches, nosebleeds, loss of smell, brain damage, memory loss, trouble learning new things, trouble solving problems

4. What is sudden sniffing death syndrome?

Sudden sniffing death syndrome is when the substance inhaled causes the heart to beat quickly and irregularly. This causes heart failure and the person dies.

5. What is one new activity you'd like to try in the next year? Answers will vary.

Handouts

Included on the following pages are additional resources that you and your students' families may find useful.



Resources and services: Alcohol and other drug-use prevention

- American Lung Association Lung Help Line, 1-800-LUNG-USA (800-586-4872)
- Children's Wisconsin, www.childrenswi.org
- KidsHealth, www.kidshealth.org
- LifeStance Health, www.lifestance.com
- National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA), www.drugabuse.gov
- Partnership to End Addiction, www.drugfree.org
- Rogers Behavioral Health, www.rogersbh.org
- The Tobacco Control Resource Center for Wisconsin, www.tobwis.org
- United States Government-Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), www.getsmartaboutdrugs.gov
- Wisconsin Tobacco Quitline, 1-800-QUIT-NOW

Transcript

Slide 1

When most people think of harmful drugs, they don't think of items used for things such as cleaning or painting that are found in their homes. However, when these chemicals are abused they are called inhalants and can be extremely dangerous, even deadly.

Inhalants are substances that are sniffed to give the user a rush, or a high. Examples of inhalants include glue, paint thinner, gasoline, permanent markers, white-out, hair spray, spray paint, and cleaning products.

Just because someone is spraying hairspray on their hair or cleaning the bathroom doesn't mean they are using inhalants. A person is using inhalants if their intention is to get high. A high is a temporary period of feeling really happy or good.

Slide 2

When people use inhalants, they breathe in the chemicals directly from the container, which is called sniffing or snorting, from a plastic bag, which is called bagging, or by holding an inhalant-soaked rag to the mouth, which is called huffing. The chemicals are quickly absorbed through the lungs into the bloodstream and travel to the brain and other organs of the body.

Slide 3

The user will immediately feel a high, then quickly feel effects such as sleepiness, staggering, dizziness, and confusion. The high only lasts for a few minutes.

Slide 4

Long-term use puts someone at risk for many problems such as headaches and nosebleeds. They can also sometimes lose their sense of smell. Inhalants decrease oxygen flow to the brain which can cause brain damage. The user can end up having memory loss, trouble learning new things, or trouble solving problems.

Slide 5

The scariest thing about inhalants is that they can kill a person the first time they try them. This is called Sudden Sniffing Death Syndrome. The substance inhaled causes the heart to beat quickly and irregularly and the person then dies of heart failure. A user can also die from suffocation when using inhalants. The brain cannot get enough oxygen because of the chemicals being inhaled, causing the user to stop breathing.

Slide 6

Getting involved in school, church, or community activities is an important defense against drugs. Being involved in activities helps you in many ways. You can learn to solve problems, care for others, become responsible, feel special, and set realistic goals.

One of the things that make each of you special is that you have unique talents. Getting involved in different activities provides you with opportunities to discover and develop your talents. You may also meet new friends who like to do the same things you do!

If you are not already involved in sports, clubs, music, or other activities, think about something new you would like to try this year.



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