

Amyl Nitrite or 'Jungle Juice'

Amyl nitrite is an inhalant that belongs to a class of chemicals called alkyl nitrites. This group of drugs can be called 'poppers'. They are often referred to by their brand name, with 'Jungle Juice' probably being the most well-known of these.

Inhaling amyl nitrite relaxes the body and gives a 'rush' that lasts for one to two minutes. It is commonly used to enhance sexual pleasure and induce a feeling of euphoria and well-being.

As with any drug, the use of nitrites is not risk-free. Some of the harms associated with its use include:

- **injuries related to inhaling the vapour (e.g., rashes, burns)**
- **allergic reactions**
- **accidents and falls**
- **vision problems (isopropyl nitrite)**
- **in rare cases, blood disorders**

MOST IMPORTANTLY, AMYL NITRITE OR JUNGLE JUICE MUST NEVER BE DRUNK.

Drinking amyl can result in death due to it interfering with the ability of the blood to transport oxygen.

What is amyl nitrite?

Amyl nitrite is an inhalant that belongs to a class of chemicals called alkyl nitrites. Amyl nitrite is a highly flammable liquid that is clear or yellowish in colour. It has a unique smell that is sometimes described as 'dirty socks'. It is highly volatile and when exposed to the air evaporates almost immediately at room temperature.

What is it used for?

Amyl nitrite has been used medically for the treatment of chest pain and also to treat some forms of drug poisoning. It can also be used to enhance sexual experience or to induce a general sense of pleasure. Inhaling nitrites relaxes the muscles in the body by dilating blood vessels and dropping heart rate and blood pressure. The physical effect can cause body temperature to increase, dizziness, and a feeling of excitement or rush that lasts around one to two minutes.

What is 'Jungle Juice'?

Amyl nitrite can be sold under different product or brand names but as a group are often referred to as 'poppers'. This name is believed to have originated from a time when the liquid was available in small glass containers that were opened by crushing them between the fingers, resulting in a popping sound.

Over the years, to bypass legal restrictions, nitrites have been sold as such things as liquid incense or room odouriser. Jungle Juice, which can be sold as a leather cleaner, is a common product name of amyl nitrite.

How is Jungle Juice used?

Jungle Juice, like all amyl nitrites, is a type of inhalant. It is usually purchased in small glass bottles and is commonly used by holding an open bottle close to the nose and inhaling the vapour. Amyl nitrite is light sensitive so the bottles it is purchased in are usually dark coloured or covered to protect their contents.

Is inhaling Jungle Juice safe?

As with any drug, the use of nitrites, including amyl nitrite is not risk-free.

In addition to the desired effects, the inhalation of nitrites can cause include nausea, nose bleeds, slowed breathing and blurred vision. Headaches are the most commonly reported negative effect once the high passes and is one of the main reasons people stop using the drug. Some of the other harms associated with its use include:

- **injuries related to inhaling the vapour: frequent use over a short period of time can cause a rash to form around the mouth and/or nose, whilst direct**

Legal Disclaimer

The information provided on this fact sheet is provided for information purposes only. As such it **cannot substitute for the advice of a medical professional**

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contact with the skin should be avoided as it can cause burns

- allergic reactions
- accidents and falls due to intoxication

Most importantly, amyl nitrite must never be drunk. Drinking amyl can result in death. When ingested orally, rather than inhaling the drug, a molecule called methaemoglobin can be formed. This can interfere with the ability of the blood to transport oxygen and can lead to death.

Is amyl nitrite legal?

In Australia amyl nitrite is regulated by the Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) and can be prescribed by a doctor to treat hypertension (high blood pressure).

As of 2020 it became a medicine that can be purchased at a pharmacy without prescription. This means it can be bought by adults after they have had a conversation with a pharmacist to ensure they know the potential risks. Whilst being a regulated medication can make a drug safer due to knowing exact doses and ingredients, prescription medications still have the potential to cause harm, particularly if they are used inappropriately.

It is important to note that if police find young people who are using nitrites and they believe they are at risk, although there may not be an actual charge, they do have a 'duty of care' to ensure their safety and could remove the product and/or call their parents or even an ambulance if necessary.

Can inhaling Jungle Juice make you go blind?

There is a rare risk of loss of vision when inhaling nitrites. This is most commonly associated with the use of isopropyl nitrite, which is part of the same family of chemicals as amyl nitrite. Most commonly Jungle Juice contains amyl nitrite, which is not associated with this problem.

It is worth remembering that although products purchased from a pharmacist are regulated, Jungle Juice purchased online is not and it may contain other chemicals. The manufacturers of the products sold online may have 'tweaked' the compound in an effort to get around the laws that exist in different parts of the world. This can result in the manufacture and use of potentially more dangerous substances and this is where the use of isopropyl nitrite sold as amyl nitrite may have occurred.