

KHAT ALSO KNOWN AS QUAT or GAT



What is Khat?

Khat is a stimulant drug. It is an amphetamine and has similar effects to Cocaine and Tik. Khat comes in two forms – the original (Cathinone) and artificial form (Methcathinone). Khat originally comes from a leafy green plant called *Catha edulis*. The leaves at the top of the plant are used and have the active ingredient cathinone in it. The leaves are green, brown, or yellowish in colour depending on their age.

The artificial form is more potent and is known as methcathinone. When made it is usually in a white/off-white powder. Both chemicals cathinone and methcathinone are harmful and speed up the functioning of the Central Nervous System. Although methcathinone is more potent, both forms of khat have similar symptoms and effects.

How is Khat used?

The Khat leaves are chewed or brewed in tea and swallowed. The powder is usually snorted or injected. When made available in the dance scene it is in a tablet form. Khat is used in a crash binge pattern (use a lot, go into withdrawal then use more to stop the withdrawal symptoms) that lasts four to six hours.

Symptoms?

- Dilated (Enlarged) Pupils
- Dehydration and Sweating caused by an increase in body temperature
- Weight Loss
- Insomnia (Problems Sleeping)
- Rapid Heart Beat
- Teeth grinding and jaw clenching often resulting in gum being chewed.
- Twitching

Effects?

- Euphoria – feelings of extreme happiness
- Increased confidence – the user begins to talk more and feel good about themselves.
- Sharpened senses – becoming more alert
- Impaired Judgement and Concentration
- Increased Energy
- Rapid Speech

Addiction – dependency is developed rapidly especially to khat in the powder form. The risk of addiction is like Tik and Cocaine where the user will feel unable to cope once they have stopped using. Their daily use increases and withdrawal sets in.

There is no safe level of drug use. Use of any drug always carries some risk. It's important to be careful when taking any type of drug.



**Help is available:
ALCOHOL AND DRUG INTERVENTION CENTRE**

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