

Are illegal drugs worse for society as a whole than legal drugs?

A drug is a substance that makes artificial changes to your body or mind and can have both positive and negative effects. Drugs like cannabis (marijuana), cocaine (crack) and drugs with high concentrates of opium (such as heroin) are illegal because they are harmful and can be dangerous to your offspring or people nearby. They each have a different classification depending on how strong it is, for example LSD is Class A, codeine is Class B, magic mushrooms are Class C and so on. The higher the classification, the more trouble you will be in with the law if caught with it. On the other hand, there are legal drugs too such as tobacco, alcohol and paracetamol. These are allowed in restricted use because it can be tolerated if used sensibly and medication like paracetamol can help cure a headache if used on occasion. However just because they are legal, doesn't mean they are guaranteed to be any safer than an illegal drug.

Illegal drugs may be seen as worse for a society than legal drugs because they can change how the body and mind works instantly for a few hours with big effect, even just after one use. For example heroin is made from a substance called morphine, extracted from an opium poppy to kill pain and give a warm and relaxing feeling to the user. Many people take it after clubbing to help them calm down from all the adrenaline and get sleepy- their reaction times will slow because heroin is a depressant drug, as well as a painkiller. First intakes can trigger nausea and lack of coordination to the user but can be highly addictive and people can get hooked even after only trying it once. The body will gradually build a tolerance to it (if taken regularly) but if gone without a few days, that tolerance will rapidly drop and therefore risk health and life if it was taken again. Overdoses and inhaling heroin can break down your immune systems which can lead to illness, comas, and in some cases: death. Also, interjecting heroin is very risky, especially if the needles are shared because it can lead to the user contracting a serious disease like HIV or Hepatitis C. As a result of all this, heroin is an illegal Class A drug because it is dangerous for the user. Therefore, it is useless by society and, although still a common crime sanctioned by police across the country every day, is now not so much of a problem in comparison to other drugs, especially the legal ones.

On the other hand, legal drugs may be seen as worse for society because although they are legal and can be tolerated by the body in most cases- they are so widely used and abused by so many people being careless- just because they know it's legal and believe the consequences won't be as bad. For instance, alcohol is a currently a massive issue in the UK when it comes to health, law and society. This is because social arrangements like clubs, parties and other celebrations are a lot more common and the price of drink has decreased by 45% for the UK in the last three and a half decades. In 2010, drug expert Professor Nutt for the BBC reported alcohol is a more risky drug than Class As such as heroin and cocaine due to the fact alcohol has caused more deaths than most Class As as it is legal so more and more careless people turn to it to get hooked to. Like heroin, alcohol is a depressant drug and can reduce anxiety and focus, making you feel more sociable, reckless and less afraid to show emotion in your actions. Moreover, it exaggerates the way you felt when you started drinking. For example, if you were drinking happy then the alcohol can exaggerate that happiness depending on how much you drink in that time. However, if you were drowning your sorrows or having a few angry drinks then it can exaggerate your negative emotions; in most cases to a dangerous level where it can affect yourself and others very badly. Being a depressant, alcohol also slows your reflexes, mental and physical stability, concentration and coordination which can make it hard to drive, work and even walk for a few hours without having an accident. In 2011, over 9990 people in the UK were reported casualties of drink-driving and had suffered long-term injury or even death due to another driver's