

## The crystal methamphetamine phenomenon

Crystal methamphetamine, or ice, is a white, odorless crystalline form of the stimulant methamphetamine. When smoked in crystalline form, the pleasurable – and addictive – effects are immediate and last up to 12 hours. Other forms of methamphetamine, such as powdered, are not commonly abused in Hawai'i.

### What is crystal methamphetamine?

Methamphetamine is an addictive stimulant that strongly activates certain systems in the brain, specifically the central nervous system. Small doses can raise alertness and block hunger. It's sometimes used as a temporary treatment for obesity.

➤ **Commonly known as** speed, meth, and chalk. In smokable form, it's called ice, crystal, crank and glass.

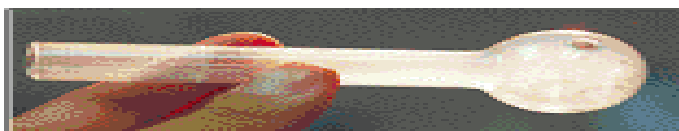
➤ **Appearance:** White, odorless, bitter-tasting crystalline powder. Ice is a large, clear crystal that is smoked in a glass pipe.

➤ **Duration:** Snorting produces effects within 3 to 5 minutes; oral ingestion produces effects within 15 to 20 minutes; smoking produces effects that last for hours.

➤ **Risks and side effects:** Anxiety, emotional swings, paranoia, violent behavior, fever, convulsions. Increased blood pressure may cause death from burst blood vessels in the brain or heart failure.



DEA photo



Advertiser library photo

Crystal methamphetamine, top, and a glass pipe used for smoking it.

### By the numbers

Estimated cost of an ounce of ice in 1977:

**\$10,000**

In 2000:

**\$3,000**

Approximate number of doses in one gram of ice:

**30**

Estimated cost of one gram in Honolulu:

**\$300**

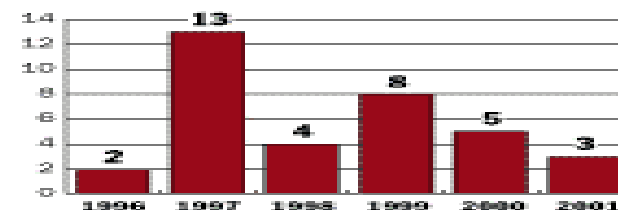
Sources: U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration, National Drug Intelligence Center, Associated Press

### Where it comes from

Drug producers use solvents to convert powdered methamphetamine to a nearly pure, crystal form of the drug. Most of the powdered and crystallized drug is smuggled in from Mexico and California.



NUMBER OF METHAMPHETAMINE LAB SEIZURES IN HAWAII (federal, state and local)



Chemicals seized at a methamphetamine lab raid in Kane'ohe in 2001.

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