

Cocaine

The “Reward Centre” Connection

Cocaine use appears to stimulate a part of the brain located in the hypothalamus. The hypothalamus looks after all of our basic needs like hunger, sex drive, and the need for water. Repeated use appears to cause changes in brain activity causing “mis-programming” of behaviour. In other words, our body thinks we have eaten and drunk and does not send out the proper signals, therefore, serious complications arise. *Withdrawal can cause eating “binges” which are also a great stress on our system.*

There is a connection between cocaine use and eating disorders; particularly bulimia and compulsive overeating. Many individuals begin using cocaine or other stimulants to help reduce appetite or control their bodies. Eventually, the drug begins to take control as tolerance develops to its appetite suppressing benefits.

In Recovery...

It is thought that vitamins B, C and amino acids are important in recovery due to their connection to the neurotransmitters which are depleted by cocaine use. (Dopamine, norepinephrine and serotonin). Due to the low body weight of chronic cocaine users, higher fat foods such as nuts, whole milk, etc, would be good choices.

Sources of vitamin C...

Citrus fruits, broccoli, cauliflower, red and green peppers.

Tips: Heat destroys vitamin C. Eat things raw whenever possible. Also, consume vitamin C with iron rich foods. This increases absorption of vitamin C.

Sources of amino acids

Complete proteins. Meat and dairy products, eggs, fish and fowl.