

Polydrug Use: Why is it so Dangerous?

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Nowadays, polydrug use is predominant among drug users [1], being especially associated with some specific recreational contexts such as clubs, festivals or raves [2].

Polydrug use can be defined as consecutive or concomitant use of different drugs [3], and it is carried out with different purposes. On the one hand, some people try to achieve new effects or experiences which cannot be provided for each substance separately. Furthermore, the mixing of substances is carried out to reduce the unwanted effects or to enhance the desired ones [4-6].

Polydrug use can result in potentially negative consequences on people's health. It is possible that effects boost themselves, interact or even new ones emerge, complicating the intervention on acute intoxication episodes [7]. For instance, there is agreement about alcohol consumption increases the blood levels of cocaine around 30%. Besides, it contributes to the synthesis of cocaethylene, a psychoactive metabolite of cocaine with a major duration in blood [3]. Nonetheless, the certainties about the effects of polydrug use and their consequences on health are in most cases unknown. It is common that when alerting on the risk associated to polydrug use, to refer to the impossibility of predict the pharmacological resulting effects. Therefore, polydrug use consequences are both unknown and feared.

The design and implementation of effective strategies for prevention and risk/harm reduction should necessarily emerge from two sources of knowledge. On the one hand, it is necessarily to identify polydrug use patterns, particularly: more used substances, substance mixed, administration order, quantity, etc... Furthermore, it is necessary further progress on the knowledge of different effects related to interactions among different polydrug use patterns. An in-depth knowledge of different patterns of polydrug use and related effects will

provide to social and policy makers with better tools to avoid negative consequences on people's health.

Despite of recent years numerous investigations about polydrug use has been conducted, still today remains a research need and priority. This is reflected, for example, in the strategy/work program of the European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction [1]. Keeping this in mind, the Open Access publication model is appropriated to spread this kind of knowledge. We must keep adding answers to this question: why is polydrug use so dangerous? As a member of the editorial board, I would like to encourage researchers to carry out investigations on this important topic and send their articles to the Journal of Socialomics.

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