



Supporting Someone Through Home Detox



Before you start...

A successful support person knows the person well and has the ability to remain positive and calm. Detox symptoms tend to get worse before they get better so patience and a positive attitude is key.

Help create a safe, comfortable space for the person.

If at all possible help the person stock up nutritious food and supplies for the duration of the home detox (typically about a week)

Make alternate arrangements/assistance for responsibilities if needed and available: alternate care or assistance for young children or elderly family members, take time off work if able

Limit visitors – especially drug using friends. This will limit triggers/cravings, and reduce unnecessary stimulation which can prevent or limit irritability, and agitation

Know what to expect. Understand the stages and symptoms of withdrawal



Symptoms to watch out for...

Symptoms of Crystal Meth withdrawal don't tend to be life threatening, but there are a few you want to pay close attention to.

Dehydration - make sure the person is drinking plenty of water

Irritability – some people can become aggressive, stay calm, give them space if you can, and ensure your own safety

Depression – can lead to self harm and suicidal thoughts. Call your Local On Call for support **306-XXX-XXXX**. If the person is in immediate danger of themselves call **9-1-1** or take them to an emergency room

Paranoia/psychosis/hallucinations – if symptoms become severe, disruptive, or the person become a danger to themselves or others get them to an emergency room





Stages of Detox from Crystal Meth



1

Stage one, the “crash” occurs during the first couple of days after the last use

Withdrawal will be most intense within the first 24 hours

Symptoms:

- **Excessive amounts of sleep**
- **Increased appetite** (can last up to 2-3 weeks)
- **Irritability**
- **Anxiousness**
- **Dysphoria** (unease or dissatisfaction with life)

2

Stage 2, acute withdrawal, occurs 2-3 days after the last use and typically lasts around **7-10 days**

Symptoms:

- **Aches and pains**
- **Agitation/irritability/ mood swings**
- **Anxiety**
- **Depression**
- **Fatigue/exhaustion** (usually peaks around the 5th day)
- **Insomnia/sleeping difficulties** (can experience vivid dreams)
- **Memory problems/ difficulty concentrating**
- **Cravings**
- **Paranoia/hallucinations/ Psychosis** (peaks during phase 2)

3

Stage 3, post acute withdrawal

During this stage most of symptoms should be starting to fade

Symptoms:

- **Mood swings** (additional 2-3 weeks)
- **Agitation** (an additional 2-3 weeks)
- **Cravings** (and additional 2-3 weeks – relapse is common during this stage)
- **Trouble sleeping** (an additional 2-3 weeks)
- **Depression** (weeks, months, years)

Factors to consider...

Duration and severity of symptoms depend on age (typically the older the person the more severe the symptoms and longer duration), the persons mental and physical health, the quality of crystal meth being used, how much they used, how frequently they used and if they've tried quitting before (severity and duration increase each attempt at quitting)





Supporting Someone Through Crystal Meth Withdrawal



How to support during...

Fatigue/Exhaustion/Insomnia/Sleeping difficulties – create a comfortable safe space, darken the room, and limit stimulants such as light and noise

Increased appetite – encourage them to eat nutritious food and drink plenty of water

Anxiousness/Anxiety/Depression/Dysphoria (unease or dissatisfaction with life) – listen to them, encourage them to relax, practice deep breathing, mindfulness activities, or yoga

Aches and pains – encourage the person to take a hot bath or shower, stretch, or do yoga

Agitation/Irritability/Mood swings – ensure your own safety, don't take anything personally, be patient, remain calm and positive, try not to argue, and encourage relaxation such as deep breathing, and meditation

Memory problems/ difficulty concentrating – encourage them to make lists and write things down

Cravings - encourage them to follow the 5 D's

Do an activity (play cards, color, draw, play a game)

Delay making any **drastic decisions** (don't make a decision for 20 minutes, an hour, two hours...)

Drink plenty of water

Discuss and remember reasons for quitting

Do some gentle exercises

Paranoia/hallucinations/Psychosis (thoughts, ideas, and/or senses that the person experiences but are not real) – do NOT deny or confirm their reality, listen to what they are experiencing, focus on what they are feeling, and use empathy statements (“That must be scary for you”)



Additional Community Supports...



Community Health
Centre
306-XXX-XXX

Community Health
Nurse
Name
306-XXX-XXXX

Community
Addiction Counsellor
Name
306-XXX-XXXX

