Drugs can attack your body inside and out—from your teeth and bones to your organs.

The human body is an amazing organism from the brain, where trillions of connections per millisecond keep you functioning, to the heart, which pumps 2,000 gallons of blood from your head to your toes every day. Your body also has a pretty awesome immune system that can recognize and destroy millions of biological invaders to protect your health.

Maintaining a healthy body requires a delicate balance of good food, rest, and exercise. As strong and resilient as our bodies are, alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs are incredibly powerful in their ability to create illness and disease.
Undersize Me
Steroid use can stop bones from growing. Teen abusers may never reach their full adult height.

Flatline
Sniffing common household chemicals like solvents (e.g., butane, propane), aerosols (e.g., spray paints, hair sprays), or gases can cause rapid, irregular heartbeats and lead to fatal heart failure within minutes. This is known as “sudden sniffing death.”

Ready for Cancer?
Cigarette smoking and nicotine have been linked to about 90 percent of all cases of lung cancer. Smoking cigarettes is associated with increased risk of respiratory diseases, including emphysema, bronchitis, chronic cough, and asthma.

Not a Good Look
Methamphetamine abusers often report feeling like they have insects crawling under their skin, which causes them to pick at their skin, creating sores.

Messing With Hormones
Anabolic androgenic steroids are artificial forms of the male sex hormone testosterone. Abusing them can affect the reproductive system, causing shrunken testicles, infertility, baldness, and the development of breasts in males. In females, abusing them can cause facial hair, male-pattern baldness, changes in the menstrual cycle, and deepening of the voice.

Poison
Heavy drinking of alcohol, even for a few days, can cause fat to build up in the liver. This condition is called steatosis (fatty liver) and impairs the liver’s ability to remove toxins, digest foods, and make important proteins the body needs.

Hot and Dry
Ecstasy and methamphetamine users risk kidney failure when their body temperatures soar and they become dehydrated, restricting blood flow to the kidneys.

Nose No More
Snorting cocaine can destroy cartilage in the nose, like the septum—the hard tissue that divides the nose into nostrils. This can lead to nosebleeds and can decrease the ability to smell.

Bad Breath and More
Tar and nicotine from tobacco are sticky substances that build up on the teeth and tongue, which can lead to bad breath, gum disease, discolored teeth, and tooth loss. Cigarettes and chewing tobacco also contain cancer-causing chemicals that flood the mouth and throat, increasing the risk of cancer in the mouth, pharynx, and larynx.

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SHARING THE PAIN
Each year about 46,000 nonsmokers who have been exposed to someone else’s cigarette smoke die from coronary heart disease.