

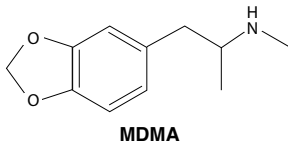
# RIA Reaching Others: ‘Molly’ Who? The New Ecstasy

“Molly” has been making news lately. Bad news.

Recently, organizers of a New York City music festival cancelled the last day of performances when two people died—and four more were hospitalized in critical condition—due to ingesting the club drug “Molly.”



## So, what is it?



Molly (short for “molecule”) is the powder or crystal version of 3-4 methylenedioxy-methamphetamine (MDMA), more commonly known as Ecstasy. It is believed to be a “purer” form of MDMA – as compared to Ecstasy, which is often combined with other substances, such as caffeine, the diet drug ephedrine or cocaine. However, some Molly capsules have been found to also contain cathinones (“bath salts”), cocaine, heroin and other substances.

## Is it dangerous?

**Yes.** In 2009, there were 22,816 emergency room visits due to MDMA, a 123 percent increase from 2004.

Negative side effects from using Molly may include:

- ❖ Confusion
- ❖ Anxiety
- ❖ Depression
- ❖ Sleep disruption
- ❖ Nausea, chills or sweating
- ❖ Involuntary teeth clenching
- ❖ Drug craving

At high enough doses, Molly may lead to:

- ❖ Agitation and paranoia
- ❖ Disorganized thinking
- ❖ Muscle rigidity
- ❖ Convulsions
- ❖ Liver, kidney, and cardio problems
- ❖ Death

## Is it illegal?

Yes. The Drug Enforcement Agency has classified MDMA as a Schedule 1 controlled substance.

## Is it addictive?

Yes. Contrary to popular belief, MDMA is addictive for many individuals—one report indicated that, among young adult and adolescent users, 43 percent of users met diagnostic criteria for dependence and 34 percent met criteria for abuse. Further, the neurotransmitters affected by Molly/MDMA are the same as those in other addictive drugs.

## Are there any health benefits?

Unknown. Recent studies are investigating whether MDMA is useful in treating post-traumatic stress and other anxiety disorders.

## For more information:

Information for teens: <http://teens.drugabuse.gov/drug-facts/mdma-ecstasy-or-molly>

The science of MDMA: <http://www.drugabuse.gov/publications/research-reports/mdma-ecstasy-abuse>

Statistics on MDMA use: [http://www.monitoringthefuture.org/pubs/monographs/mtf-vol2\\_2010.pdf](http://www.monitoringthefuture.org/pubs/monographs/mtf-vol2_2010.pdf)

Molly at music festivals:

<http://www.drugfree.org/join-together/drugs/molly-powder-or-crystal-form-of-mdma-is-popular-at-music-festivals>

## Music and Molly



Like its “big brother” Ecstasy, Molly gained popularity as a club drug and is most often used by people age 16 to 24. Its use is often associated with dance club music, and many major music artists have included positive references to Molly in their songs, including Kayne West, Trinidad James and Rihanna. Miley Cyrus’ eyebrow-raising 2013 VMA performance included the lyrics “we like to party, dancing with Molly” from her song, “We Can’t Stop.”

## How does it work?

A manufactured stimulant, Molly increases the activity of three important brain neurotransmitters: serotonin, dopamine and norepinephrine. This can produce feelings of euphoria, emotional closeness and increased energy. The effects typically last three to five hours, although the half-life of MDMA is six to ten hours.

