

Illicit but Healing: A Field Guide to the Medical Uses of 'Illegal' Substances

Psilocybin (aka Magic Mushrooms, Shrooms)

Legal Status: Schedule I (US)

Medical Uses: Treatment-resistant depression, PTSD, anxiety, addiction

Source:

<https://www.hopkinsmedicine.org/news/newsroom/news-releases/psilocybin-treatment-for-major-depression-effective-for-up-to-a-year>

Conditions Treated: Depression, PTSD, Anxiety, Addiction

MDMA (aka Ecstasy, Molly)

Legal Status: Schedule I (US)

Medical Uses: PTSD, anxiety, couples therapy

Source: <https://maps.org/mdma/>

Conditions Treated: PTSD, Anxiety, Trauma

LSD (aka Acid)

Legal Status: Schedule I (US)

Medical Uses: Cluster headaches, depression, anxiety

Source: <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC6007659/>

Conditions Treated: Cluster Headaches, Depression, Anxiety

Ketamine (aka Special K)

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Legal Status: Schedule III (US)

Medical Uses: Treatment-resistant depression, suicidal ideation, chronic pain

Source: <https://www.nih.gov/news-events/nih-research-matters/ketamine-relieves-depression-symptoms>

Conditions Treated: Depression, Suicidal Ideation, Chronic Pain

Ayahuasca / DMT (aka Yagé, Spirit Vine)

Legal Status: Schedule I (US)

Medical Uses: Addiction, PTSD, spiritual healing

Source: <https://www.frontiersin.org/articles/10.3389/fphar.2016.00035/full>

Conditions Treated: Addiction, PTSD, Spiritual Crisis

Cocaine (aka Coke, Blow)

Legal Status: Schedule II (US)

Medical Uses: Topical anesthetic in ENT/dental procedures

Source: <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK532879/>

Conditions Treated: Oral Surgery, Tooth Pain, ENT Anesthesia

Cannabis (THC/CBD) (aka Weed, Marijuana)

Legal Status: Schedule I (US) - legal in some states

Medical Uses: Chronic pain, epilepsy, anxiety, nausea

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Source: <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5741114/>

Conditions Treated: Chronic Pain, Epilepsy, Anxiety, Nausea

Ibogaine (aka Iboga)

Legal Status: Schedule I (US)

Medical Uses: Opioid addiction, trauma processing

Source: <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC6082376/>

Conditions Treated: Addiction, Depression, PTSD

Peyote (Mescaline) (aka *Lophophora williamsii*)

Legal Status: Schedule I (US), exempt for religious use

Medical Uses: Spiritual healing, trauma relief, addiction treatment

Source: <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC6781733/>

Conditions Treated: PTSD, Addiction, Spiritual Trauma

Heroin (Diacetylmorphine) (aka Smack, H, Dope)

Legal Status: Schedule I (US), legal in some countries for palliative care

Medical Uses: Severe pain management (in UK, Switzerland)

Source: <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2873253/>

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Conditions Treated: Severe Pain, End-of-Life Care

Methamphetamine (aka Meth, Crystal, Ice)

Legal Status: Schedule II (US) - available by prescription as Desoxyn

Medical Uses: ADHD, obesity (prescribed form)

Source: <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/12763993/>

Conditions Treated: ADHD, Obesity