

## Foxy methoxy <sup>[1]</sup>

Dear Alice,

The new acid like synthetic club drug "Foxy" has caught the attention of a few of my friends and I am wondering what kind of high it is — compared to LSD — and what kinds of damage it does to the brain?

### Answer

Dear Reader,

You ask a great question and it's fantastic that your curiosity led you to a Foxy fact-finding mission! For those unfamiliar with the drug, "Foxy" and "Foxy Methoxy" are nicknames for 5-methoxy-N,N-diisopropyltryptamine, (or 5-MeO-DIPT). It falls under the class of tryptamines, which can be found in both naturally-occurring and synthetic forms. While some naturally-occurring tryptamines are neurotransmitters found in the body (such as serotonin and melatonin), others are psychoactive hallucinogens found in substances such as "magic" mushrooms. More recently, some tryptamines have become popular as recreational drugs, including a newer generation of synthetic (lab-made) substances, like Foxy. There are several variations of synthetic tryptamines, though the catchy "street names" of these substances may sound similar (including one called "Moxy"). Based on limited accounts (it's an illegal substance after all), Foxy produces hallucinogenic effects comparable to LSD (d-lysergic acid diethylamide). While the long-term impacts of the drug aren't well known, this substance does have more immediate and short-term health effects that are good to be aware of before testing the waters with this synthetic substance.

Foxy can be found in tablet, powder, or capsule form and has largely been associated with club and rave scenes. Use as an erotic enhancer has also been noted due to its hallucinogenic properties. Although, as a relatively new synthetic drug, there's very limited information about its effects. Moreover, a user's experience can be influenced by their personality, mood, environment, and state of mind at the time of use, so reactions to it can vary. What is clear is that, in addition to potentially altering sensory perception and judgment, Foxy might cause folks to experience mood changes and feelings of inhibition. Other physical and psychological effects include vomiting, diarrhea, hallucinations, nausea, confusion, and elevated heart rate and blood pressure. It has also been attributed to overdose-related deaths (a specific antidote for

tryptamine intoxication is not yet available) and poses the risk of death from irrational or risky behavior associated with altered consciousness. It's worth it to mention that people with a history of mental illness may be at a higher risk of experiencing problematic psychological effects, such as panic reactions or "bad trips." What about the effects associated with use over time? In general, hallucinogens are not typically known to cause physical dependence, though some users have experienced psychological dependence. Specifically though, when it comes to long-term effects of Foxy, they're not well studied and it's unknown whether using the specific drug leads to any kind of dependence.

Beyond what there is to know about the short- and long-term effects with Foxy, it's also good to keep in mind that, similar to many other illegal recreational drugs (especially the synthetic ones), Foxy is unregulated. Thus, its source and purity are unknown and doses could contain other unknown substances. What's more, unregulated drugs can certainly have negative consequences, but they pose an even greater risk when combined with other drugs. Specifically, hallucinogens may negatively interact with and amplify drugs that affect serotonin levels, such as meperidine (brand name: Demerol), lithium, tryptophan, and some antidepressants. Another issue to note: though not related to this drug specifically, serotonin syndrome is a known health effect of using other hallucinogens, particularly Moxy (5-MeO-MiPT), LSD, and MDMA [2]. These substances can cause serotonin levels in the brain to rise to a level of toxicity, causing various psychological and physical symptoms ranging from benign to lethal. Symptoms of serotonin syndrome include agitation, restlessness, dilated pupils, muscle contractions, high blood pressure and body temperature, and a rapid heart rate. Treatment is available for this condition, but it depends on the severity of the related symptoms.

Despite the catchy name, Foxy is not so unique compared to other psychoactive hallucinogens. Unfortunately, there's not much research or information on the health effects (including damage to the brain) resulting from the use of Foxy. But, if you want to get more information about hallucinogens in general, the National Institute of Drug Abuse (NIDA) [3] is a great resource. Bottom line though: it's wise to read up on what there is to know about these types of substances — so kudos to you for following up on your curiosity. Hopefully now you're a bit more versed on the topic and can share this knowledge with your friends.

Alice!

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## Resources

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[2] <http://goaskalice.columbia.edu/answered-questions/whats-difference-between-molly-and-ecstasy-0>

[3] <https://www.drugabuse.gov/drugs-abuse/hallucinogens>

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