



## How Do Drugs Affect My Brain?

by NEWLIFEOUTLOOK TEAM

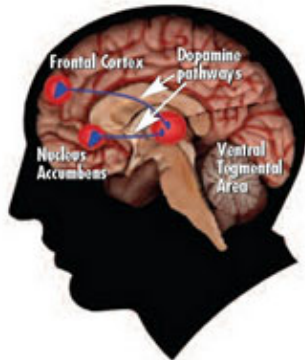
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### Drugs that Target the Brain's Pleasure Center

One role that dopamine has in your brain is for reward-motivated behavior. When you take a drug that affects the brain's pleasure center, dopamine is released at a higher rate than what is normal for a reward behavior. This is what makes drugs seem more important than a lot of other activities in life. Food, music, and art can all affect dopamine production in the brain but not to the extent of a drug such as cocaine. During rehabilitation, you should take part in music or art appreciation events in order to give your brain the dopamine increases it needs, even though it won't be to the extent of the drug. This is a great way to get out with others who have addiction and to talk about the struggles and what helps as well as to be part of an activity that will cause dopamine to increase.

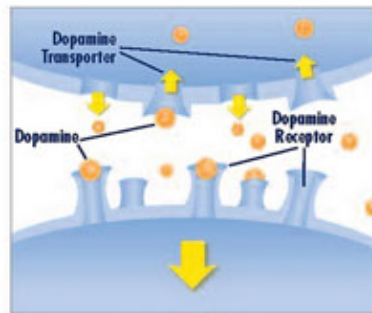
# ALL DRUGS OF ABUSE TARGET THE BRAIN'S PLEASURE CENTER

## Brain reward pathways



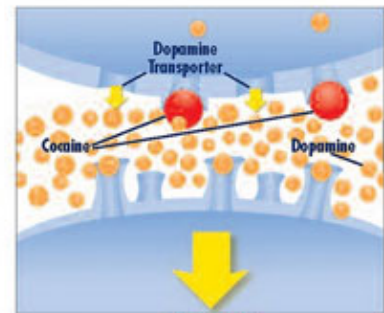
The brain circuit is important for natural rewards such as food, music, and art.

## All drugs of abuse increase dopamine



**FOOD**

Typically, dopamine increases in response to natural rewards such as food.



**COCAINE**

When cocaine is taken, dopamine increases are exaggerated, and communication is altered.