Psychedelics A to Z

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A brief introduction to the psychedelic, empathogen, dissociative and deliriant substances people meet, listed in alphabetical order. This list describes and does not recommend. Legal status is for the United States and changes often, and anything here deserves a conversation with a psychedelic-informed physician before use. Substances with their own harm reduction sheet are marked, and more sheets will follow.

1cP-LSD and 1P-LSD

Prodrugs of LSD sold online as research chemicals; the body converts them into LSD, and people report effects close to it. Federal law can treat them as analogues of LSD, so their research-chemical label does not make them a legal workaround.

2C-B

A synthetic phenethylamine, taken as a powder or pill, with a mix of psychedelic and stimulant effects that runs a few hours. It is Schedule I federally, and the pink powder sold as "tusi" or "pink cocaine" rarely contains it (street samples are usually ketamine and other drugs).

2C-C, 2C-E, 2C-I, 2C-P, 2C-T-2 and 2C-T-7

Relatives of 2C-B, with different potencies and lengths; 2C-P can last well past ten hours. 2C-T-7 has caused deaths, especially when snorted, and the whole 2C family is Schedule I in the United States.

25I-NBOMe, 25C-NBOMe and 25B-NBOMe

Extremely potent compounds active at microgram doses, often sold on blotter paper as LSD. They have caused seizures and deaths, and a reagent test kit can help tell them from LSD; they are Schedule I.

3-MeO-PCP and Methoxetamine (MXE)

Dissociative research chemicals related to PCP and ketamine, with unpredictable potency and reported hospitalizations and deaths. Legal status varies by place, and in the United States they are generally pursued as analogues.

4-AcO-DMT

A synthetic cousin of psilocybin, sometimes called synthetic mushrooms, that the body converts into psilocin. It is not scheduled by name federally but can be treated as an analogue of psilocin.

4-HO-MET, 4-HO-DET, 4-HO-DiPT and 4-HO-MiPT

Other synthetic relatives of psilocin sold as research chemicals, each with its own dose range and length. They have far less human research behind them than psilocybin, and analogue law can apply.

5-APB and 6-APB

Benzofuran compounds, sold as "Benzo Fury", with MDMA-like and stimulant effects. They have little human research behind them, and in the United States they are treated as analogues.

5-MeO-DMT

A short, intense, ego-dissolving psychedelic that occurs in the secretions of the Sonoran Desert toad and in some plants, usually smoked or vaporized as a powder. It is Schedule I and is not part of Colorado's Natural Medicine Health Act. It is also the compound in Bufo (see Bufo).

AL-LAD, ALD-52 and ETH-LAD

Close relatives of LSD that appeared as research chemicals, with effects people compare to LSD. They are federally controlled or treated as LSD analogues.

Amanita muscaria

The red-and-white fly agaric mushroom, containing ibotenic acid and muscimol, which cause sedation, confusion and dreamlike dissociation more than classic psychedelic visuals. It is not federally scheduled, some states restrict it, and poisonings are common because dose varies so widely.

Ayahuasca

An Amazonian brew pairing the vine Banisteriopsis caapi, which blocks the enzyme that breaks down DMT, with a DMT-containing leaf such as chacruna. The brew counts as Schedule I because of the DMT, apart from religious exemptions for particular churches such as Santo Daime and the UDV; the same enzyme-blocking vine makes it dangerous with antidepressants and other serotonergic medicines.

Bromo-DragonFLY

A very potent phenethylamine, sometimes sold as LSD, whose effects can last a day or longer. It has caused severe vasoconstriction, tissue damage and deaths, so it is among the most dangerous compounds in this list.

Bufo (Sonoran Desert toad)

The toad Incilius alvarius makes a secretion rich in 5-MeO-DMT, which is dried and smoked for a short, overwhelming experience. 5-MeO-DMT is Schedule I, licking the toad is dangerous because of its other toxins, and the species is under ecological pressure, which

is why many practitioners use synthetic 5-MeO-DMT. The compound is also available synthetically (see 5-MeO-DMT).

Datura, belladonna, henbane and other deliriant plants

Plants rich in tropane alkaloids such as atropine and scopolamine that cause true delirium: confusion, amnesia and hallucinations the person cannot tell from reality. They are not psychedelics in the usual sense, they are legal as plants, and they send many people to emergency rooms and cause deaths; high doses of diphenhydramine (Benadryl) produce a similar state.

DMT

A tryptamine found in many plants and in the human body, smoked or vaporized for an immersive experience of about 5 to 20 minutes, and active by mouth only when paired with an enzyme blocker as in ayahuasca. It is Schedule I federally and is covered by Colorado's Natural Medicine Health Act.

DOM, DOB, DOC and DOI

Long-acting, potent amphetamine-based psychedelics (the DOx family) that can last half a day or longer. They are Schedule I, and DOB and DOI have been sold as LSD on blotter.

DXM (dextromethorphan)

The cough suppressant in many over-the-counter cold medicines, which acts as a dissociative at doses far above the label. It is legal to buy, but combining it with antidepressants or other serotonergic medicines can cause serotonin syndrome, and products with added decongestants or acetaminophen add their own dangers.

Escaline and proscaline

Relatives of mescaline, reported to be more potent than the original. They have little human research behind them and are treated as mescaline analogues.

Ibogaine and iboga

Ibogaine comes from the root bark of the African shrub Tabernanthe iboga, central to Bwiti initiation, and is studied for opioid withdrawal. It is Schedule I, it can cause dangerous heart rhythm changes and deaths, and it is covered by Colorado's Natural Medicine Health Act.

Ketamine

Federally Schedule III, used legally as an anesthetic, used off-label for depression, and available as the nasal spray esketamine (Spravato); it is also used illegally. At higher doses it is a dissociative, and frequent use can damage the bladder and become habit-forming.

LSA (morning glory and Hawaiian baby woodrose seeds)

Seeds that contain lysergic acid amide, a relative of LSD with a heavier, sedating, body-focused effect and frequent nausea. The seeds are sold for gardening, and preparing them for effect is a legal gray area.

LSD

A lysergamide active at microgram doses, usually taken on blotter paper, with effects of about 8 to 12 hours. It is Schedule I federally, and it is the compound most often imitated by other drugs sold as LSD.

MDMA and MDA

MDMA is an empathogen with some psychedelic qualities, and MDA is its longer, more psychedelic relative; both are Schedule I. MDMA has been studied for PTSD, and the FDA declined to approve it in 2024.

Mescaline

The psychedelic found in peyote, San Pedro and Peruvian torch cacti, lasting 10 to 12 hours and often causing nausea. It is Schedule I federally, and Colorado's Natural Medicine Health Act covers it with the exception of mescaline from peyote.

Mimosa hostilis (jurema root bark)

A root bark sold legally as a dye and botanical that contains DMT. Extracting DMT from it produces a Schedule I substance.

Nitrous oxide

A gas used in dentistry and whipped cream chargers that produces a brief, dissociative euphoria when inhaled. Heavy use depletes vitamin B12 and can cause nerve damage, the FDA has warned against inhaling it for effect, and some states restrict it.

Other tryptamines (AMT, DET, DiPT, DPT, 5-MeO-DiPT and 5-MeO-MiPT)

Older tryptamines, each with its own odd profile; AMT, for one, can last 12 hours or longer. Most are Schedule I, and little research on any of them exists.

PCP

A dissociative, Schedule II in the United States, that can cause agitation, aggression, loss of pain sensation and severe psychosis. It carries a high risk of injury to the person and others, and it is often smoked on other materials.

Peyote

The small spineless cactus Lophophora williamsii, source of mescaline and sacrament of the Native American Church, whose members may use it legally; for everyone else it is Schedule I. It is excluded from Colorado's Natural Medicine Health Act. It takes many years to grow and wild populations face over-harvesting, so Native communities who use it as sacrament ask outsiders to respect that need before seeking the plant.

Psilocybin and psilocin (magic mushrooms)

The active compounds in more than 100 species of mushroom, eaten, brewed or taken in capsules, with effects of 4 to 6 hours. Schedule I federally, decriminalized in Colorado and regulated in Oregon and Colorado; New Mexico's medical program is next.

Salvia divinorum

A Mexican mint that contains salvinorin A, which is smoked or chewed for a very intense dissociation of about 5 to 15 minutes. It is not federally scheduled, and many states ban it.

San Pedro and Peruvian torch cacti

Fast-growing mescaline cacti used in the Andes for thousands of years and grown ornamentally in the United States. The cacti are legal to grow, and preparing them for the mescaline is a Schedule I act, apart from Colorado's decriminalization of mescaline that does not come from peyote.

Syrian rue (harmala)

A plant whose seeds contain harmala alkaloids that block the enzyme which breaks down DMT, used in ayahuasca analogues. It is legal to buy, and the enzyme blockade makes it dangerous with antidepressants, stimulants and many other medicines.

Yopo, cohoba and vilca

Seeds of Anadenanthera trees, used for centuries in South America as ritual snuff and rich in bufotenin and DMT. Bufotenin and DMT are both Schedule I, and snuffing them is hard on the nasal passages.

Related, but Not Psychedelics: Things You May Meet Alongside Them

These are not psychedelics. They turn up in the same circles and ceremonies, so people ask about them.

Fentanyl (as a contaminant)

Nobody seeks it here; it turns up in counterfeit pills and in powders sold as other drugs such as cocaine, ketamine and MDMA, and a tiny amount can stop breathing. It is Schedule II, and fentanyl test strips and naloxone are the standard harm reduction tools.

Hapé (rapé)

A ground Amazonian snuff made mostly from the tobacco Nicotiana rustica mixed with plant ash, blown into the nostrils with a pipe, either by a practitioner or by the user. It gives a sharp nicotine rush with nausea, sweating and a grounding feel, it is legal in the United States as a tobacco product, and it can raise heart rate and blood pressure and builds nicotine dependence.

Kambo

A waxy secretion of the Amazonian giant monkey frog (Phyllomedusa bicolor), applied to small burns made in the skin, which brings intense vomiting, a racing heart and swelling within minutes. It is not scheduled in the United States, and it has caused deaths and serious injuries.

Kratom

The leaf of a Southeast Asian tree (Mitragyna speciosa) that acts on opioid receptors, stimulating at low doses and sedating at higher ones. It is not federally scheduled, though federal action on concentrated 7-hydroxymitragynine products is under way, a number of states ban it, Colorado regulates it, and regular use can cause dependence and withdrawal.

Where to Read More

[1] DEA Diversion Control Division, Controlled Substance Schedules: https://www.deadiversion.usdoj.gov/schedules/

[2] National Institute on Drug Abuse, Hallucinogens: https://nida.nih.gov/research-topics/hallucinogens

[3] Erowid: https://erowid.org

[4] PsychonautWiki: https://psychonautwiki.org