

# Overdose and Poisoning (Adults)

**Table 3.69**

## Illegal Drugs *continued*

DRUG	DESCRIPTION
<b>3-4 methylene dioxyamphetamine (MDMA) – Ecstasy 'E'</b>  Commonly known as: doves, apples, strawberries, and diamonds.	<p><b>MDMA</b> is a psychoactive drug with hallucinogenic effects.</p> <p><b>OUTWARD SIGNS</b> Sweating, dilated pupils and elevated mood.</p> <p><b>EFFECTS</b> Feeling warm, energetic, and friendly, rising to a state of euphoria.</p> <p><b>ADMINISTRATION</b> 'E' tablets may be white embossed 'headache' sized pills, or coloured capsules. They take 40 minutes to work, lasting for 2–6 hours. 'E' may not be addictive but is illegal.</p> <p><b>SIDE EFFECTS</b></p> <p><b>Cardiovascular system</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Tachycardia (<a href="#">refer to cardiac rhythm disturbance guideline</a>).</li><li>Capillary rupture, causing red marking on the face in particular.</li></ul> <p><b>Central nervous system</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Some patients develop hyperpyrexia which can be life-threatening. These patients need urgent transfer to hospital for specialist care. Cooling measures (<a href="#">refer to heat related illness guideline</a>) may be helpful but should not delay transfer to further care.</li><li>Depression, panic and anxiety may also occur.</li></ul> <p><b>Liver and kidney damage</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Liver failure and severe kidney damage may occur.</li></ul> <p><b>Other:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Cystitis and heavy periods may occur in females who use 'E'.</li></ul> <p><b>TREATMENT</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Administer diazepam to control anxiety and agitation – <a href="#">refer to diazepam guideline</a>.</li><li>Treat convulsions with diazepam – <a href="#">refer to diazepam guideline</a>.</li><li>If the systolic BP &gt; 220 and diastolic &gt; 140 mmHg in the absence of longstanding hypertension give diazepam – <a href="#">refer to diazepam guideline</a>.</li><li>Correct hypotension by raising the foot of the bed and/or by giving fluids as per medical emergencies – <a href="#">refer to intravascular fluid guideline</a>.</li><li>Cooling measures (<a href="#">refer to heat related illness guideline</a>) may be helpful but should not delay transfer to further care.</li><li>Depression, panic and anxiety may also occur.</li></ul>