

MAIN*line*



STREET

IN CASE YOU WANT HELP

WISE

**ARE YOU LIVING ON THE
STREETS IN THE NETHERLANDS?
DO YOU USE DRUGS?**

This little guide will help you find your way. For instance: can you get medical help? Will you get fined if you use drugs? We hope this guide will give you a helping hand!

MAINLINE

**STREET
WISE**



DRUGS IN THE NETHERLANDS

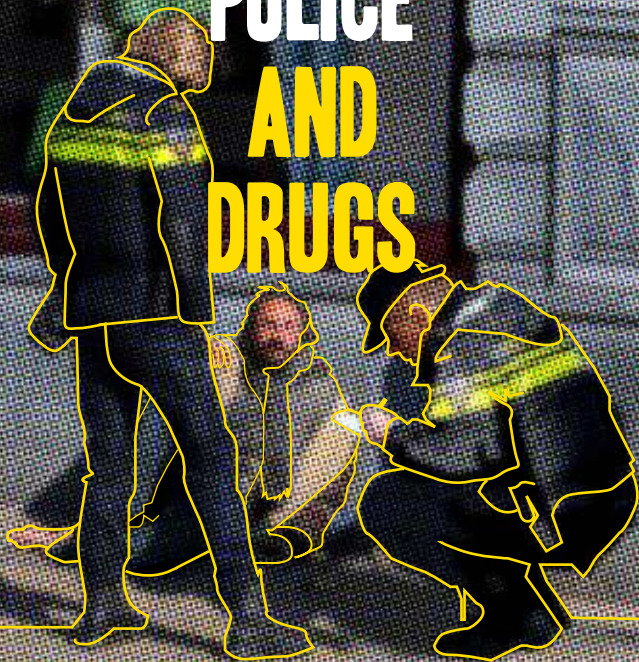
If you're new to the Netherlands, understanding the official drug policy can be confusing. Here are some key points:

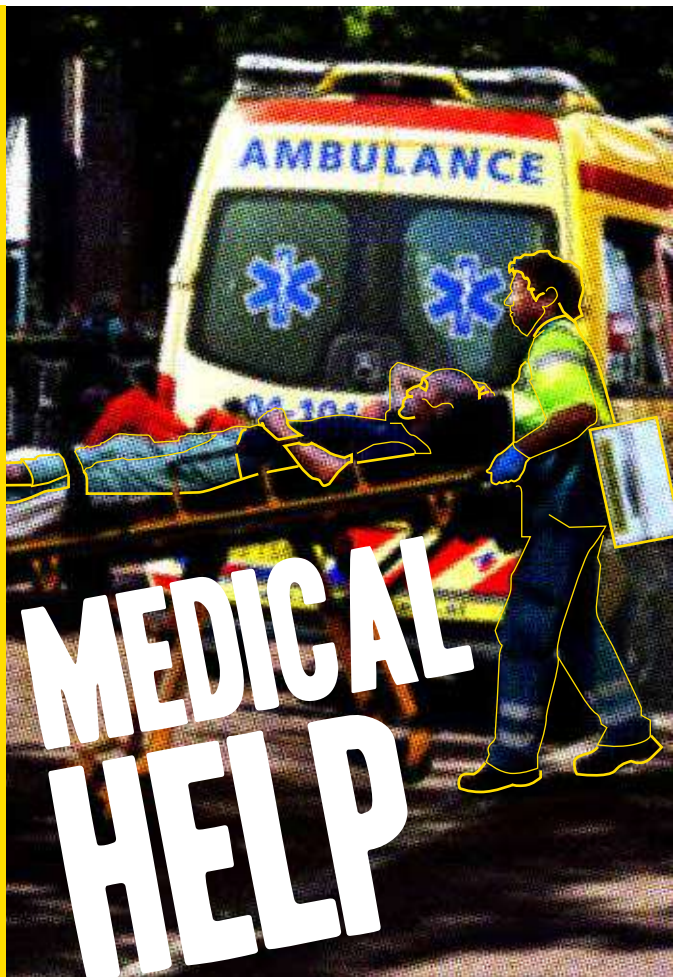
- ★ Using drugs is **not** considered a crime.
- ★ Buying and having drugs (including cannabis) is illegal, but there's a tolerance for small amounts meant for personal use.
- ★ You will not be prosecuted for having less than 5 grams of cannabis or small amounts (0,5 grams/ 1 pill) of "hard drugs".
- ★ If the police finds drugs on you, they can still take it from you and you might get a criminal record depending on the officer, but it will not go to court and you won't have to pay money or go to prison.

Dutch police are generally lenient toward people who use drugs, especially compared to neighboring countries. Drug use is not illegal, so you will not be arrested for use.

- ★ If there's an emergency or overdose, you can call 112 without fear of prosecution. Police will only help you, not arrest or question you for your drug use. Be honest about your own or a friend's drug use; this will make it easier for medical professionals to help.
- ★ Using drugs in public spaces may lead to fines and you can be asked to leave that location.
- ★ The police may also fine you for sleeping outside. If these fines add up to a high amount and you don't pay, you might have to serve a short prison sentence instead
- ★ The police may assist you and direct you to available city services. People who live on the street say they usually have OK experiences with the police, especially compared to the treatment in other countries.

DUTCH POLICE AND DRUGS





WHERE CAN YOU GET MEDICAL HELP FOR...

**EERSTE
HULP**

... an emergency?

In case of an emergency, you can always go to the ER of a hospital. They'll help anybody that needs urgent help.

**STRAAT
DOKTER**

... less urgent matters?

For less urgent issues, visit a street doctor available in many cities, providing accessible healthcare for those who are not insured.

**TANDARTS
VAN DE
WERELD**

... dental problems?

Dental issues can be addressed through dentist projects like 'Dentist of the World' which offers free or low-cost dental care. Ask street doctors for a dentist in your town.

MEDICAL HELP NOTES

USEFULL
ADRESSES
MAINLINE.NL/EN/
ADRESSES

AMSTERDAM: STREET DOCTERS

Kruispost: Oudezijds Voorburgwal 129 A
Dr Valkenier: Valckenierstraat 2, 020-5559427.

UTRECHT: Herstart: Nieuwegracht 92

DEN HAAG: mon,thur,fri 070-3881111
tue: 070-8500557
wed: 070-3639470

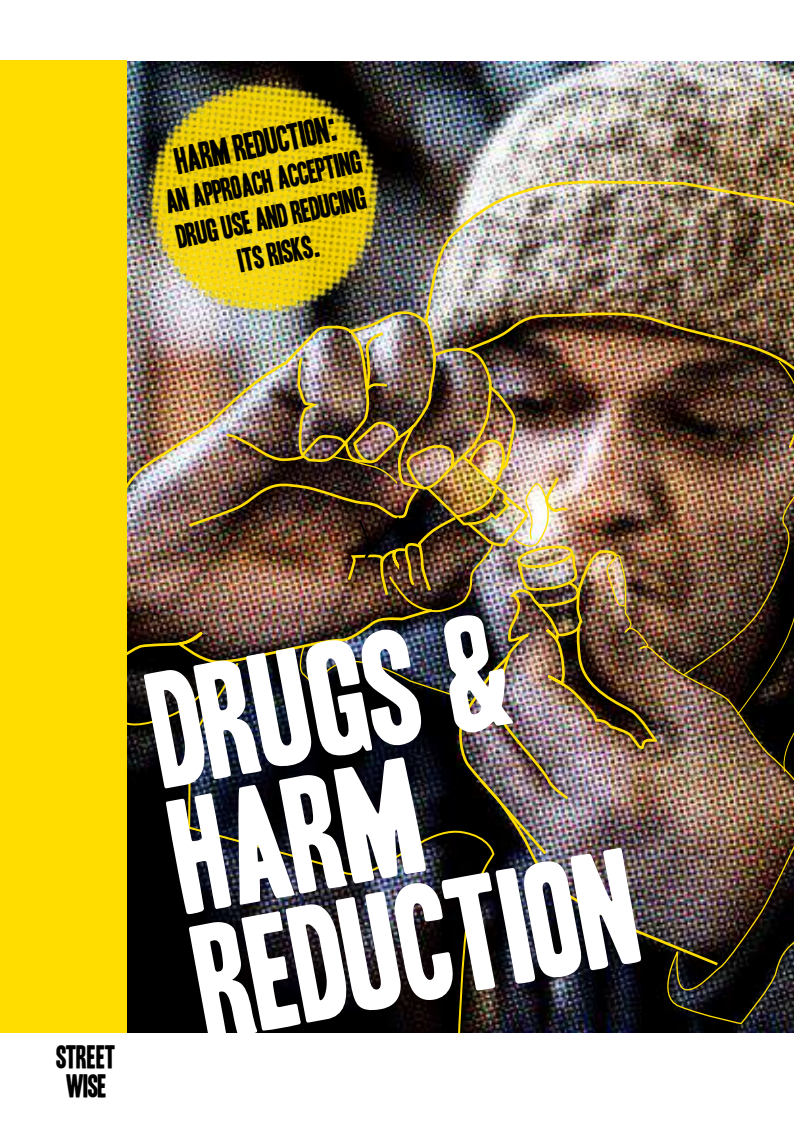
EINDHOVEN: 040-2519950

ROTTERDAM: www.straatzorgrotterdam.nl/locaties

HARM REDUCTION SERVICES

Harm Reduction services in the Netherlands focus on health and social integration for drug users.

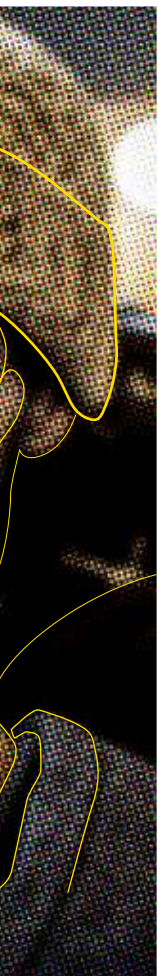
- ✱ These services won't report drug use or homelessness to the police. They have a duty to care and will safeguard your privacy/identity.
- ✱ Harm Reduction services are free and accessible to everyone, including undocumented people or those without insurance.
- ✱ Some services may deny you access when you aren't formally registered in the Netherlands. When this happens, ask them where you can go – sometimes cities have specific services for people who are undocumented.
- ✱ Ask around for Harm Reduction services in your city. The GGD or at the local addiction care they should be able to refer you.



**HARM REDUCTION:
AN APPROACH ACCEPTING
DRUG USE AND REDUCING
ITS RISKS.**

DRUGS & HARM REDUCTION

**STREET
WISE**



RELEVANT SERVICES FOR PEOPLE WHO LIVE ON THE STREETS AND WHO USE DRUGS:

Drug Consumption Rooms:

- ✱ Safe spaces to use drugs.
- ✱ Provides social and medical assistance.
- ✱ Offers clean needles and other items.

Needle and Syringe Exchange:

- ✱ Obtain clean needles from drug consumption rooms, city health services, or pharmacies.
- ✱ Ask about proper disposal methods.
- ✱ Bins for needles are usually available at locations providing clean needles.

Opioid Substitution Treatment (OAT):

- ✱ Programs by city health services or addiction care centres.
- ✱ Access may be difficult. You might have to be persistent or ask a social worker to help you get treatment.

WWW
MAINLINE.NL/EN/
SYRINGE-EXCHANGE/

WHERE CAN YOU...

GGD

..... get clean needles?

Access needle exchange through municipal health service, local addiction care or Harm Reduction organizations like Mainline. Some pharmacies also sell needles.

**GEBRUIKS
RUIMTEN**

... use drugs?

Most bigger cities in the Netherlands have drug consumption rooms. These offer a safe place to use and get clean materials.

**HUIS-
ARTSEN**

... get methadone?

Get methadone through addiction treatment centres, GGD or some general practitioners.

**VERSLA-
VINGS-
ZORG**

... get information about drugs?

GGD and drug clinics can usually help you with information about drugs.

HARM REDUCTION NOTES

USEFULL
ADRESSES
MAINLINE.NL/EN/
ADRESSES

USEFULL WEBSITES

Test drugs: drugs-test.nl/en

Drugs info: unity.nl/en/drug

Cocaine base: mainline.nl/en/cocaine

DRUG



UPPERS

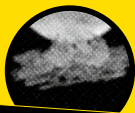
stimulants



speed



cocaine



crystal meth



xtc

PHYSICAL EFFECTS

- * Increased heart rate and blood pressure
- * Higher body temperature
- * More energy and alertness
- * Less appetite
- * Enlarged pupils
- * Trouble sleeping (insomnia)
- * Muscle twitching or shaking

MENTAL EFFECTS

- * Feelings of euphoria and well-being
- * Increased confidence and ability to be social
- * Better focus and concentration
- * Anxiety and paranoia
- * Aggression and irritability
- * Hallucinations and delusions at high doses
- * Strong craving (mental state of wanting more)
- * Mood swings and depression after stopping use

EFFECTS

PHYSICAL EFFECTS

- * Slowed heart rate and breathing
- * Lower blood pressure
- * Muscle relaxation
- * Drowsiness and sedation
- * Poor coordination
- * Slurred speech
- * Slower reflexes
- * Constipation
(especially with opioids)
- * Intense withdrawal symptoms
when dependent

MENTAL EFFECTS

- * Feelings of euphoria and relaxation
- * Reduced anxiety and stress
- * Poor judgment and memory
- * Mood swings
- * Depression
- * Cognitive problems with long-term use
- * Dependence on numbed feelings

DOWNERS

Depressants



alcohol



ghb



heroin



benzo's





UPPERS

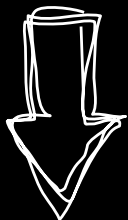
stimulants

DRUG RISKS

- * Heart problems like heart attacks, irregular heartbeats, and high blood pressure.
- * Higher risk of mental health issues, such as anxiety, paranoia, and psychosis.
- * High chance of dependence because of strong craving and depressed feelings when not using.

DOWNERS

Depressants



- * Risk of overdose with severe respiratory depression, which can be fatal (especially with GHB and heroin).
- * High chance of dependence due to withdrawal symptoms and reliance on numbed feelings to deal with life.
- * Severe and potentially life-threatening withdrawal symptoms (especially with alcohol and benzo's).
- * Increased risk of accidents and injuries due to poor coordination and judgement.
- * Long-term health issues like liver damage (with alcohol) and cognitive decline.



COMBINING UPpers & DOWNERS

One drug can hide the effects of the other, and they might not work at the same time and for the same amount of time. So, if you take an upper that works shortly with a downer that works longer, the downer can make you overdose when your upper has worn off.

TIPS FOR DRUG HARM REDUCTION

SMOKING

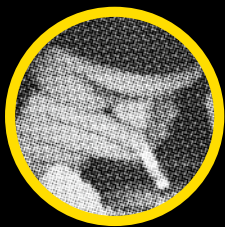


- * Use metal screens (preferably steel) in you pipe to prevent inhaling ash.
- * Make the pipe longer, so the smoke has more time to cool down.
- * Use a normal lighter, not a torch, to prevent burning your drugs and damaging your lungs.

SHOOTING



- * Always use sterile injecting materials, and don't reuse your own
- * Inject in both arms and never in a wound.
- * Never inject by yourself. Two is safer in case of OD.
- * Dispose used needles at a needle exchange service.



SNORTING

- * Have your own tube to sniff to prevent infections.
- * Regularly rinse your nose with water.

DRUGS & DAILY LIFE



- * Test your drugs if you don't trust your supply. Find drug testing services at: www.drug-test.nl/en
- * Beware of dependence. Try to take pauses regularly.
- * Make sure to prioritize food and sleep.
- * If you have heavy withdrawal symptoms from alcohol or GHB and want to quit, reduce your daily intake gradually instead of quitting all at once.

UNDERSTAND CANNABIS

IT'S AN ENHANCER



It's important to understand what state you're in before using cannabis. Many people think cannabis will simply relax you, but that's not always the case.

Cannabis makes the feelings you already have stronger. Depending on your mood and the situation you use it in, the type of cannabis and the amount you use, cannabis can make you feel more energetic, more relaxed or even more stressed and anxious.

Some high THC cannabis can even make you trip a little, which means you might have unusual (paranoid) thoughts or see things that aren't there.

Beware of cannabis with high levels of THC if you are prone to paranoia or psychosis. In that case, higher levels of CBD is generally a better idea.

**CANNABIS
AFFECTS EVERY-
ONE DIFFERENTLY**

So be aware of how
you feel before using it,
how you want to feel,
and how the cannabis
actually makes you
feel.

TIPS WITH TIPS



DON'T HOLD THE SMOKE

CBD MAY COUNTER PARANOIA

BEWARE OF HIGH THC

**CHECK YOUR MOOD
BEFORE SMOKING**

DON'T HOLD THE SMOKE

CBD MAY COUNTER PARANOIA

BEWARE OF HIGH THC

**CHECK YOUR MOOD
BEFORE SMOKING**

BED, BATH & BREAD



**STREET
WISE**

SHELTERS

WWW
BASICRIGHTS.NL

**WINTER-
KOUDE-
OPVANG**

- * The Netherlands has day and night shelters for people living on the streets.
- * Shelters may be full, and some services may refuse uninsured or undocumented individuals.
- * Night shelters usually charge a small fee but provide a warm meal.
- * In winter when it is below 0°C, special winter shelters are available, including for uninsured or undocumented people.
- * Every city is obligated to offer shelter, but many fall short of this obligation.

WHERE CAN YOU...

**HET LEGER
DES HEILS**

... get something to eat?

You can get free or low-cost meals at shelters and community centres. Organizations like the Salvation Army and local soup kitchens provide regular meals.

**BUURT-
HUIZEN**

... shower and use a toilet?

Public facilities, shelters, and community centres often offer toilet access and sometimes showers too. There is also an app named 'toilet finder' that shows you public toilets. Some cities also have public shower stations available.

**NACHT-
OPVANG**

... sleep?

Night shelters are available in most cities, providing a safe place to sleep. When the temperature is below zero, there are special winter shelters. Daytime drop-in centres can also provide rest areas during the day. Addresses can be found online or ask around with other people living on the street.

**WINTER-
KOUDE-
OPVANG**

BED, BATH & BREAD NOTES

USEFULL
ADDRESSES
MAINLINE.NL/EN/
ADDRESSES

NETHERLANDS Rights & Addresses for undocumented:
Basicrights.nl

AMSTERDAM: [streetlife app](#)

apple
app-store



google
play



ROTTERDAM www.rotterdam.nl/dak-of-thuisloos
(use translation option)

SLEEPING

Important things to consider when
you're forced to sleep on the streets:

OUTSIDE

MORE THAN ONE: if possible,
sleep with others. There is
safety in numbers.



STEALTH CAMPING:
set up late at night
and leave early in
the morning.



CLOTHING:
layering helps
to retain heat
and cover your
head.



TARP OR PLASTIC:
to protect against
wind and rain.



COMMUNICATE: be polite and explain your situation
when approached by the police. Hopefully you
won't be fined. Sometimes, they will direct you to
nearby resources.

SHELTER FROM WIND AND RAIN:

under bridges, in porches, or near buildings with overhanging roofs.



SLEEPING BAG:

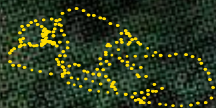
a mummy sleeping bag retains heat better.

BLANKETS:

wool retains heat well even when wet.

INSULATION FROM THE COLD GROUND:

Use an insulation mat, cardboard or a thick pile of dry leaves.



LEAVE NO TRACE: tidy up when you leave to prevent complaints and reduces the chance of a fine.

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