



# Salvia

*Street names: Magic Mint, Sally-D, Ska Pastora*

EXPAND ALL

**Revised March 2017**

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## What is salvia?

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**Also known as:** Diviner's Sage, Magic Mint, Maria Pastora, Sally-D, Seer's Sage, and Shepherdess's Herb

Salvia (*Salvia divinorum*) is an herb in the mint family found in southern Mexico. The main active ingredient in salvia, salvinorin A, changes the chemistry in the brain, causing hallucinations (seeing something that seems real but isn't). The effects are short lived, but may be very intense and frightening.

Although salvia is not illegal according to Federal law, several states and countries have passed laws to regulate its use. The Drug Enforcement Administration lists salvia as a drug of concern that poses risk to people who use it.

### **How Salvia is Used**

Usually, people chew fresh *S. divinorum* leaves or drink their extracted juices. The dried leaves of *S. divinorum* also can be smoked in rolled cigarettes, inhaled through water pipes (hookahs), or vaporized and inhaled.

## What happens to your brain when you use salvia?

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Researchers are studying salvia to learn exactly how it acts in the brain to produce its effects. What is currently known is that salvinorin A, the main active ingredient in salvia, attaches to parts of nerve cells called kappa opioid receptors. (Note: These receptors are different from the ones involved with opioid drugs, such as heroin and morphine.)

The effects of salvinorin A are described as intense but short lived, generally lasting for less than 30 minutes. People who use salvia generally have hallucinations—they see or feel things that aren't really there. They also have changes in vision, mood and body sensations, emotional swings, and feelings of detachment (disconnected from their environment). There are reports of people losing contact with reality—being unable to tell the difference between what's real and what's not. Many of these effects raise concern about the dangers of driving under the influence of salvia.

Learn more about [how the brain works and what happens when a person uses drugs](#).

## What happens to your body when you use salvia?

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Physical and other effects of saliva use have not been fully studied. There have been reports that the drug causes loss of coordination, dizziness, and slurred speech.

## Can you overdose or die if you use salvia?

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It is not clear if there have been any deaths associated with salvia. However, because we do not know all of salvia's effects, it is a drug that authorities are watching carefully.

## What are the other risks of using salvia?

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We don't know the long-term effects of using the drug. However, recent studies with animals showed that salvia harms learning and memory.

## Is salvia addictive?

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It's not clear if using salvia leads to addiction. More studies are needed to learn whether it has addictive properties.

## How many teens use salvia?

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Below is a chart showing the percentage of teens who use salvia.

### Monitoring the Future Study: Trends in Prevalence of Salvia for 8th Graders, 10th Graders, and 12th Graders; 2016 (in percent)\*

Drug	Time Period	8th Graders	10th Graders	12th Graders
Salvia	Past Year	0.90	0.90	1.80

\* Data in brackets indicate statistically significant change from the previous year.

For more statistics on teen drug use, see [NIDA's Monitoring the Future study](#).

## What should I do if someone I know needs help?

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If you see or hear about someone misusing opioids, talk to a coach, teacher, or other trusted adult.

If you, or a friend, are in crisis and need to speak with someone now, please call:

- **National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 1-800-273-TALK** (they don't just talk about suicide—they cover a lot of issues and will help put you in touch with someone close by).

If you need information on treatment and where you can find it, you can call:

- **Substance Abuse Treatment Facility Locator at 1-800-662-HELP** or visit [www.findtreatment.samhsa.gov](http://www.findtreatment.samhsa.gov).

For more information on how to help a friend or loved one, visit our [Have a Drug Problem, Need Help? page](#).

## Where can I get more information?

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### Drug Facts

**NIDA:**

- [Commonly Abused Drugs Chart](#)
- [DrugFacts: Salvia](#)

**Statistics and Trends****NIDA:**

- [DrugFacts: High School and Youth Trends](#)

**Monitoring the Future (University of Michigan):**

- [Monitoring the Future](#)

**Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration:**

- [National Survey on Drug Use and Health](#)

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