Making changes; a Care Plan

ChemSex Care Plan

Have you decided to make some changes around your Chem use?
This online guide can be done with your healthcare provider, or on your own. It’ll help you to identify a goal, and work toward it. Just follow the prompts.
Ready?

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Has pensado en hacer algunos cambios en el uso que haces de las “Chems”?
Esta guía online la puedes usar tú solo, o junto con tu profesional de la salud, y te ayudará a identificar tus objetivos y a trabajar para conseguirlos. Simplemente sigue las instrucciones.

¿Preparado?

(Ningún dato de información personal queda registrado al usar estas páginas.
Ningún botón en el que pinches, ninguna casilla que marques, quedarás almacenado, registrado o enviado a ninguna base de datos. Esto es completamente anónimo y confidencial.
No hay “campos obligatorios”. Puedes volver atrás o adelantarte tantas veces como quieras.
 Esto es únicamente para tu propio uso personal.)

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Choose a goal

ChemSex Care Plan

Choose a goal to work toward from these options...

Abstinence
Take a short break
Play more safely
Still not sure what I want to do...
Support with abstinence

- Adapting to this “change-of-life”
- Identifying & better-managing the cravings and triggers we will experience
- Negotiating sober sex and horny-ness
- Creating new friendships/networks.
- Communicating with older friends/networks
- Re-Learning our relationship to sex, what we want from it, how to pursue it
- Re-negotiating the role sex-apps play in our lives (& other social media)
- Learning to manage our raw emotions without the support of the "confidence-giving" chems.
Choose a goal

ChemSex Care Plan

Choose a goal to work toward from these options...

- Abstinence
- Take a short break
- Play more safely
- Still not sure what I want to do...
Play more safely

Pre-setting boundaries
Knowing your limits
Safer drug-dosing
Play with guys you trust

The law

Safer ChemSex
Crystal meth
GHB/GBL
Mephedrone
Sexual wellbeing
Safer injecting
Safer sex
Safer App use

Playing more safely.
Establish some boundaries, when sober.
For example:
• what drugs you are prepared to do, which you aren’t
• ways of administering the drugs, (eg. smoking versus injecting)
• what sex stuff you’re prepared to do, what you aren’t. We can get carried away when we’re high, and push the boundaries of what’s safe – sometimes be numb to pain or warning signs.
• How long you’ll play for, what you will & won’t do sexually
• How you expect to be treated. & treat others
• Some rules about how you expect your house to be treated, or how you’ll behave in others.

Only use clean equipment, surfaces, stencils, toys, douches, tube pumps, razors & toothbrushes/brushers needles, straws, glasses.
We can get a bit paranoid or worse-for-worse after playing for too long, so try to pre-arrange a finish time; agree this with a friend or partner set an alarm on your phone. It’s difficult to adhere to when we’re high, but worth the effort, and we can get better at it if we have a friend’s support.
Eat and drink; exhaustion & dehydration, only make the recovery time worse, and in fact may improve our “high”, make us less prone to paranoia or aggression.

Not everyone out there is kind, and many more do more to be kind, but the high can make us less conscious of other people’s needs or concerns. It can be wise to let a friend know the address you’re going to, if it’s an unknown new sex partner. Borders can be long and chaotic, it’s good if someone knows where you are should anything go wrong.

The Tabs below have more information about mephedrone (Meph, MKat), crystal methamphetamine (Tina, Ice, Meth) and GHB &GBL (G, Gina); including how to use these drugs more safely, how to keep the harm at a minimum...
- as well as safer injecting, GHB/GBL dosing, and more. With thanks to 56 Dean Street, Antidote at London Friend and GMFA
Choose a goal

ChemSex Care Plan

Choose a goal to work toward from these options...

- Abstinence
- Take a short break
- Play more safely
- Still not sure what I want to do...
Reflecting on drug use/behaviour

What do I enjoy about ChemSex?

What do I dislike about ChemSex?

Do I sometimes miss days at work/college because of chems?
- Yes
- No
- Maybe

NEXT
### Reflecting on drug use/behaviour

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Options</th>
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</thead>
</table>
| Have I ever overdosed on GHB/GBL?                                        | ☐ Yes (only in front of friends/partners/shags)  
|                                                                          | ☐ Yes (hospitalised)  
|                                                                          | ☐ Yes (no one saw me)  
|                                                                          | ☐ Never  
|                                                                          | ☐ I don't do GHB/GBL                                                                                                                   |
| I sometimes feel paranoid or unsafe when I take chems                     | ☐ Yes, but it's not a problem  
|                                                                          | ☐ Yes, but only rarely  
|                                                                          | ☐ Yes, frequently  
|                                                                          | ☐ Every time  
|                                                                          | ☐ Never  
|                                                                          | ☐ Yes, but it was real danger/persecution, not a side-effect of the drugs                                                           |
| I can handle my drugs, but others that I play with, can't.                | ☐ True, but it doesn't bother me  
|                                                                          | ☐ True, I'm uncomfortable being complicit in other people's problematic chem use  
|                                                                          | ☐ Untrue; everyone I play with is fine on their chems.  
|                                                                          | ☐ I can't always handle my drugs either  
|                                                                          | ☐ Everyone is responsible for themselves  
|                                                                          | ☐ We all have moments, but we look after each other  
<p>|                                                                          | ☐ This doesn't apply to me                                                                                                               |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Answer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What would be my reasons for taking a break from chems?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What would be the things preventing me from taking a break from chems?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What (if any) are the advantages of sober sex?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Choose a goal

ChemSex Care Plan

Choose a goal to work toward from these options...

- Abstinence
- Take a short break
- Play more safely
- Still not sure what I want to do...
You've chosen to take a short break from chems.
Great.
Let's start by choosing a time period that you feel would give you a sense of accomplishment, and control over your chem use.

- 4 months
- 3 months
- 2 months
- 1 month
- 2 weeks
- 7 days
- 1 weekend
- 1 day
Rate your own confidence - decisional balance

HOW CONFIDENT ARE YOU, TO ACHIEVE THIS GOAL?
Thanks for your score.
Ideally, we'd prefer you scored 7 or above on the confidence scale. We want you to do well with this plan, and get a feeling of achievement. A sense of accomplishment. You deserve that feeling.
It's possible you've chosen a goal that's a bit ambitious; it might be a good idea to choose a time period that's a bit shorter, something that will be easier to achieve?
Remember, the idea here is to give you a sense of accomplishment, to motivate you about what you can achieve. So choose again; choose a time period that you feel more confident to achieve.

I want to take a break from chems for...

1 month  ▶  2 weeks  ▶  7 days  ▶  1 weekend  ▶  1 day  ▶
Now rate confidence level again

HOW CONFIDENT ARE YOU, TO ACHIEVE THIS GOAL?
How important is it to you?

Scoring anything seven or above on the confidence scale suggests you've got a good chance of achieving your goal.

That's great. It's important you feel you can achieve this.

Now let's get an idea of how important this is to you.

It's important that you're doing this for yourself. (No one else should push you into this - be it a family member, a friend, a partner, a healthcare professional); it has to be important to you, or it won't work.

Choose a number from the scale below.

**HOW IMPORTANT IS IT TO YOU, TO ACHIEVE THIS GOAL?**
Not very important? Come back another time.

Anything 6 or below tells us that it's not enormously important to you. Which is cool.
There isn't any need to attempt making changes if it isn't important to you; sometimes it's more important to our friends or family than it is to us. If it isn't that important to make changes, then you can always come back and do this another time.
It absolutely works better when we're motivated, and when it's important to us.
If you want to think on it some more, please do; perhaps this questionnaire can be helpful.

Click to begin the questionnaire.
Rate how important it is to you (-decisional balance)

But perhaps it IS important......

Scoring anything seven or above on the confidence scale suggests you've got a good chance of achieving your goal. That's great. It's important you feel you can achieve this.

Now let's get an idea of how important this is to you.

It's important that you're doing this for yourself. (No one else should push you into this - be it a family member, a friend, a partner, a healthcare professional); it has to be important to you, or it won't work.

Choose a number from the scale below.

HOW IMPORTANT IS IT TO YOU, TO ACHIEVE THIS GOAL?
OK.
It seems it's very important to you to achieve this goal.
Let's see what else we can do to make it happen.

Identifying Triggers
Managing Cravings differently

Triggers are things that cause us to crave chems; situations, circumstances, events, emotions, places... anything that might make us think (obsessively sometimes), about doing chems. If you learn how to identify triggers, even anticipate them, then you can be better prepared for them. It's always better than being taken by surprise.

Cravings can be overwhelming; sometimes it can feel like they rob us of our power of choice. But if we learn to anticipate, identify and manage triggers better... and if we learn different techniques to manage our cravings when they hit us, we have a better chance of riding them out without using.

TIMES THAT I'M MOST VULNERABLE; TICK ALL THAT APPLY
- After work Fridays
- Weekday mornings
- Sat late afternoon (no plans)
- Bed time weekdays, can’t sleep
- Travelling home after work
- Sat night, alone
- Sat night dinner/drinks with friends
- Sunday mornings, breakfast time
- Sunday mid morning, no plans
- Sunday afternoon, bored
- Sunday late afternoon, after a busy day
- Late night Sat, can't sleep
Identifying triggers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>COMMON TRIGGERS;</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>TICK ALL THAT APPLY</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>When I'm alone</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>After drinking alone</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>When out drinking with friends</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>After clubbing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>When playing online/on Apps - no specific plans</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>When returning to London from a trip</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>After a fight with a friend/family member/partner</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>When I feel lonely &amp; miss intimacy</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>When I feel bored</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>When I feel stressed and anxious</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>When I feel horny</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>When I feel depressed</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>When I feel angry at myself, someone else, or at life.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>When I get unexpected correspondence/an invitation to party</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Returning home alone after a night out</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Returning home to partner after a night out</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>After an unsatisfactory sex encounter</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>After being rejected online</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whenever I feel like celebrating</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whenever I feel I deserve a reward for &quot;being good&quot;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
OTHER TRIGGERS: ALCOHOL? NON-CHEMSEX DRUGS?

For some, ChemSex is completely unrelated to alcohol; for others, it only happens after they’ve a drink or few. Tick the box that’s true for you:

- I’m always sober when I decide to get high/find a Chem shag
- My resistance to temptations/cravings for chems is strong when I’m sober
- My resistance to temptations/cravings for chems is definitely weaker after I’ve been drinking.
- The majority of my Chem sessions have begun while I’m under the influence of alcohol

For others, a social line of cocaine, bump of MDMA or ecstasy - though not ChemSex - can lead to sex-App use and cravings for Chems & ChemSex. How likely are you to resist ChemSex cravings in these circumstances?

- These drugs never lead to ChemSex cravings for me
- Yes, the high from these drugs often leads to ChemSex in my case
- Sometimes yes, sometimes no, it depends on other circumstances
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WHAT CAN YOU DO DIFFERENTLY NEXT</th>
<th>TIME YOU FEEL A CRAVING OR TRIGGER?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Leave the room/place I’m in</td>
<td>□ Leave the room/place I’m in</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Call a friend/supportive person</td>
<td>□ Call a friend/supportive person</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clean the house/do gardening</td>
<td>□ Clean the house/do gardening</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Write a letter/journal note to yourself</td>
<td>□ Write a letter/journal note to yourself</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Record a video message to yourself on your phone, to remind yourself of consequences</td>
<td>□ Record a video message to yourself on your phone, to remind yourself of consequences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Go to gym/do exercise</td>
<td>□ Go to gym/do exercise</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cook a favorite meal</td>
<td>□ Cook a favorite meal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Practice meditation/mindfulness</td>
<td>□ Practice meditation/mindfulness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Watch a favorite (distracting) film or box-set</td>
<td>□ Watch a favorite (distracting) film or box-set</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have a (distracting) activity ready for just these moments; make a list of these</td>
<td>□ Have a (distracting) activity ready for just these moments; make a list of these</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Get offline/close the App/</td>
<td>□ Get offline/close the App/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Take a deep breath; smile.</td>
<td>□ Take a deep breath; smile.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turn off any pornography</td>
<td>□ Turn off any pornography</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Masturbate (quickly) Then occupy yourself off line</td>
<td>□ Masturbate (quickly) Then occupy yourself off line</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Continue breathing. Take in your surroundings</td>
<td>□ Continue breathing. Take in your surroundings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Take a shower</td>
<td>□ Take a shower</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tell someone how I’m feeling</td>
<td>□ Tell someone how I’m feeling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Change the mood/music/lighting/temperature</td>
<td>□ Change the mood/music/lighting/temperature</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Go to the local shop. Buy chocolate. Ask shopkeeper how his day was</td>
<td>□ Go to the local shop. Buy chocolate. Ask shopkeeper how his day was</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Put favourite music in your ears. Go for a walk</td>
<td>□ Put favourite music in your ears. Go for a walk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Be with people who care/value you</td>
<td>□ Be with people who care/value you</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Take a deep breath: smile. Continue breathing. Take in your surroundings</td>
<td>□ Take a deep breath: smile. Continue breathing. Take in your surroundings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Call a friend/supportive person</td>
<td>□ Call a friend/supportive person</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Create a list of things you want to do this week</td>
<td>□ Create a list of things you want to do this week</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Think about what you’ll be doing two days from now - if you use, if you don’t.</td>
<td>□ Think about what you’ll be doing two days from now - if you use, if you don’t.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Watch a YouTube playlist that helps you deal with cravings</td>
<td>□ Watch a YouTube playlist that helps you deal with cravings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Change your emotional state somehow. Be creative.</td>
<td>□ Change your emotional state somehow. Be creative.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
That's it. You have your own Care Plan.

If you can, let a good friend know that you're trying to make changes. Doing this alone is never as good as having the support of a best mate. It can be difficult to share this vulnerability with someone, but do not be ashamed. It's a brave, brilliant thing you're doing here, you should feel proud of trying.

Whether you succeed at your goal, or not, you now have a toolbox of things you can do to help yourself. Sometimes it's trial and error; we don't always succeed the first time. Don't give up. Keep coming back. Choose an achievable goal, work towards it. Get better at identifying your vulnerable moments, and practice your craving management techniques. You'll get the hang of it. You'll get better each time.

And when you succeed... congratulate yourself. That's important. When you don't succeed... congratulate yourself for trying. Don't beat yourself up. There is an explainable reason why you struggle with this. Gay life, gay sex is complicated, you aren't alone. So no beating yourself up, just start a new care plan. With a smile, and faith in yourself.
FOR PROFESSIONALS

www.davidstuart.org/professionals